The Glorious Gospel

CARSON

Mr. & Mrs. James Gurney
St. Louis-Mo.

My dear friends:-

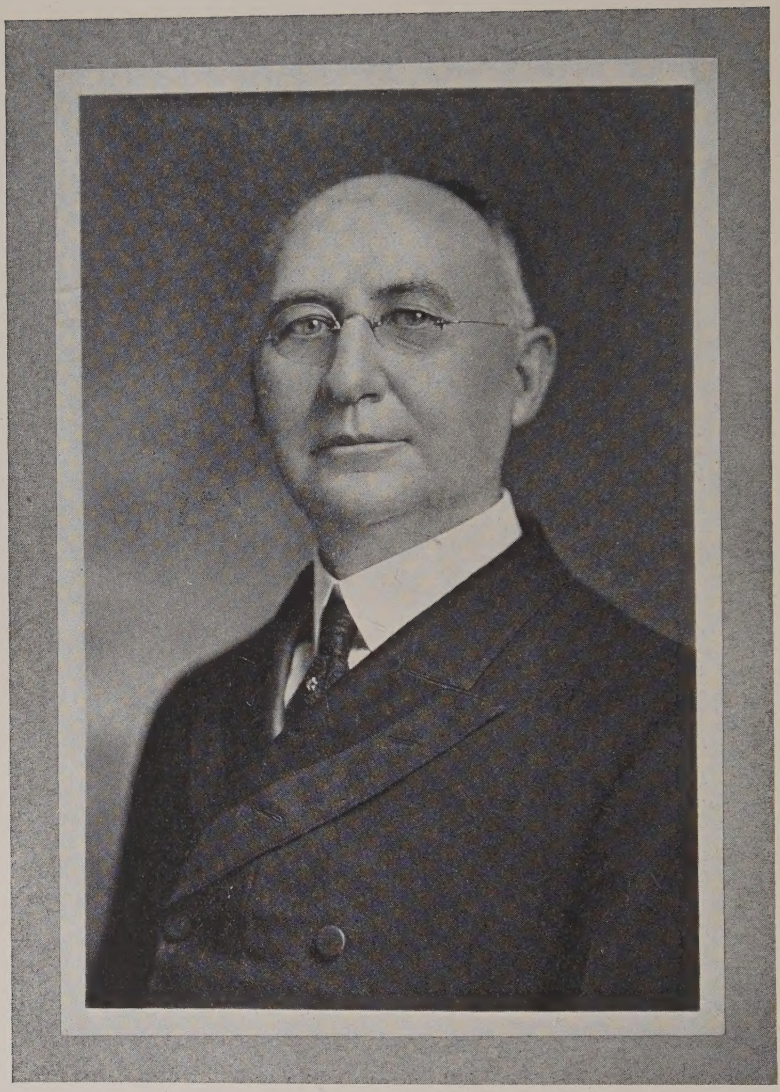
Please accept this volume with my sincere appreciation of your gracious hospitality.

It is a privilege to be represented in your home and hearts by "The Glorious Gospel" in which you believe and which is so consistently and beautifully illustrated in the lives of your excellent family.

The Lord bless you and yours and preserve you an unbroken circle in our "Father's House".

St. Louis-Mo. Sincerely yours,
Sept. 17. 1930. Charles C. Carson.

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL



Charles C. Carson

The Glorious Gospel

Sermons by

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PREFACE

THESE sermons have been preached. I cherish the hope that they have been blessed of God in the salvation and edification of souls. That, in printed form, they may revive precious memories of hallowed associations, and fruitful fellowship in the Gospel, in the hearts of many who have heard them, and that they may have a mission of power and peace to others whom I do not know, is my prayer and desire.

The "tie that binds" pastor and people is strong and sacred.

Spiritual interests are supreme and permanent. Our relations do not cease with time.

The eternal years of God are inseparable from our mutual confidence and fidelity.

The preacher has to do with the deepest experiences of human life.

He leans with tender interest toward the new-born babe that comes to brighten the home, and feels a responsibility for its unrevealed future.

He places his hand upon the brow of the cherished infant as fond parents dedicate their offspring to God.

He pronounces husband and wife the man and woman whose "two hearts beat as one," and "who henceforth are to go down life's way together, with love as the charmed word in the dialect of their home and hearts." He welcomes one by one into the Church of Jesus Christ those whose "Names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." He bears the impressive obligation of nourishing the members of the flock, and seeks by precept and example to encourage the graces that adorn the Christian life.

He is charged with the declaration of the Everlasting Gospel, and to sinners, whose need of salvation is urgent and appealing, he points the way from darkness "into marvelous light." He speaks God's word of comfort to hearts stricken with grief and to souls rife with sorrow.

He prays with sympathy and fervor in the chamber of sickness for the lingering sufferer, and commends to the grace of God the loved ones who tearfully await the end.

He bows his soul and mingles his tears with those who note the symptoms of departure in the rapid pulse and the changing countenance. He is present when the eyes close, and hears the whispered word of the faithful physician—"Dead." He goes before the mourners to the "narrow house," and there above the open grave he dispenses the consolations of the Gospel in the assurance with which Christ spoke to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." He awaits with calm confidence the reunion on the other side, "Where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths have no end."

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?"

"For ye are our glory and joy."

—*The Author.*

DEDICATION

To my Father and Mother, who taught me by precept and example the beauty and blessedness of the Christian life. They prayed that I might be a minister, and they lived to hear me preach "The Glorious Gospel." They are now in the "General Assembly and the Church of the Firstborn." - - - - - - - - -

I cherish their memory. The benedictions of their glorified spirits linger across my pilgrim path, and brighten my way to the Eternal City. O, the rapturous anticipation of meeting them again in the life of resurrection victory and ascension glory—"In His presence where there is fulness of joy—at His right hand where there are pleasures for evermore." - - - - - - - -

—The Author.

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FOREWORD

Rev. Charles C. Carson, D. D., on reaching the eighteenth anniversary of his notable pastorate in the First Presbyterian Church of Bristol, Tenn.-Va., is issuing a volume of sermons selected from those preached in this pulpit. He has asked the Vance brothers, "Jim" and "Joe," as they still affectionately call us in our home town, to write a foreword. There are three of us Vance brothers, but "Charlie," the youngest, somehow slipped the noose and landed in medicine instead of the ministry. As an elder in the First Church of Norfolk and "a doctor of the old school," he is probably the best of the three.

Dr. Carson has probably selected us not so much because we are preachers, but chiefly because from what he has heard of our ways before entering the holy calling he is convinced that the old church has no "greater miracles of grace."

As we think of our mother church, there comes back out of the shadows of the spent years the kindly face of the pastor of our boyhood days, Dr. George A. Caldwell, a man of fervid eloquence, militant piety, and far-reaching personal influence. We must confess that we slept through many of those powerful sermons, but our parents started us to church when the years were tender and the sermons long, and those Sunday slumbers were no reflection on our pastor's pulpit ministrations.

Those were the days when church discipline for worldliness was frequently in active eruption. We both fell afoul of the Session in the matter of dancing. Joe was let off

lightly, having shown the spiritual fathers that his Terpsichorean activities were not of the heart, nor even the heels, but merely a gracious effort to help out a wallflower who had no partner. Jim, however, failing to furnish evidence of any pious intentions connected with his worldly ways, went up on sentence of six months' suspension from the sealing ordinances. All this is faithfully recorded in the minutes by our father, who was clerk of session, and who was also so human that he never took very seriously the merry sidesteppings of his sons.

We two are merely a suggestion of the large numbers of the sons of this old church who have entered the Gospel ministry. It is the church which has ministered to the student life of King College, an institution that has probably produced, in proportion to the number of its graduates, more preachers than any other college in America.

The stream of recruits has continued under Dr. Carson's fruitful, richly blessed and richly blessing labors. We bespeak for this volume of scholarly, earnest Gospel sermons such a circulation as will widen out still more the influence of this well-known Southern minister.

Real Gospel preaching is the only kind that lasts, and the only sort that, even by the help of God's Spirit, "raises the dead."

Dr. Carson is not only a man of fine religious forbears, but has exercised a ministry among a people who knew what the Gospel was when they met it. His preaching has not only been Biblical, but has centered around the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Out of a heart rich and deep in its own spiritual experiences and with a sincere sympathy for the needs of his fellowman, he has brought a ministry baptized with prayer and tears; and the sermons of this book will travel far

along helpful paths for all who read them in the spirit with which he has preached them.

We cannot bring this foreword to a close without a tribute to the greatest woman in this old church, the greatest and best woman we have ever known in any church, our blessed mother, largely through whose influence our lives were turned into this channel of service, and whose unfaltering trust to the end of her days kept the banner flying for the "Old Faith," and keeps it flying still.

—James I. Vance.

—Joseph A. Vance.

I

ALL *in* JESUS *and* JESUS ALL

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."—I Cor. i. 30.

THE church in Corinth is rife with contentions. Paul, the loyal and conscientious Apostle, with merciless logic, protests against the spirit that would partition the glories of salvation between man the sinner, and Christ the Saviour. With zeal born of a surrendered life, he would ascribe "Honor to whom honor is due." In the matter of salvation he virtually urges the maxim, "To the victor belong the spoils." They were giving glory to men. Some were saying, "I am of Paul"; some, "I am of Apollos"; others, "I am of Cephas," and others, "I am of Christ." Paul answers, "Is Christ divided?" Nay, "Christ is all and in all." Salvation is of grace, "not of works, lest any man should boast." Not partially of men and partially of God, but of God absolutely. To men you owe nothing. They are but the instruments by means of which God accomplishes His purposes. Their diversified gifts are of the gracious bestowal of God. What they are and have; what they inspire in others of character and service is due to that unmerited favor which the generosity of God confers. The medium of this communication is neither Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas, "but of him are ye in *Christ Jesus,* according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Paul's conception of salvation is the true one. The only salvation that partakes of sublime and enduring qualities is the one that exalts God; that places man in the position where he really is—a sinner under condemnation; that gives to Christ the position God assigns Him, a Saviour. Hence the Apostle, with one sweep of his inspired pen, gives in our text the whole genius of God's plan for man's eternal blessedness. "Calvin rightly observes that it would be hard to find in the whole Scripture a saying which more clearly expresses the different phases of Christ's work." Christ Jesus, on the part of God, Paul declares, has been made unto us four facts: "Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." A careful consideration of these several terms will disclose to us in abundant and satisfying measure the "Grace of God which bringeth salvation."

I. *The first term is wisdom.*

It is indeed suggestive and comprehensive. In what senses has Christ been made unto us wisdom?

1. Christ Jesus is the highest expression of God's thought. He is the supreme and ultimate exhibition, exposition and demonstration of the infinite wisdom of the infinite God. "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The universe with its marvelous contents betrays the Divine wisdom from which it emanated. In vain do men seek to fathom the hidden mysteries. Science and philosophy have made many important disclosures, but they have not touched the hem of the garment of the heavenly wisdom lying in and behind their respective spheres. What they have discovered in the centuries of cumulative and persistent investigation is but as "shore to the illimitable sea stretching off from it." The "undiscov-

ered country" still challenges the researches of man, and each year evidences of God's wisdom are stronger and more convincing. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

The sun and moon and stars all proclaim the wisdom of the Supreme Being. The tiniest flower that blossoms by the way and is trodden under the foot of man is a glowing tribute to the Divine wisdom in which it is fashioned. We might go all through the manifold departments of nature, with the wisdom of God. But the perfection of infinite wisdom is found in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Man. God has given Him a name above every name. "In all things He has the pre-eminence." He is God's last and best thought. Not only by Him are all things made, but all things are made for Him.

2. Christ has been made unto us the wisdom of God, in that through Him God becomes discernible to us. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

Paul on one occasion, as he approached the cultured city of Athens, read this inscription: "To the Unknown God." They knew not God because Christ was unknown to them. By preaching Christ, the Apostle directed them to a knowledge of God. The proclamation of Christ witnessed to their intelligence the truth of Paul's statement as he pointed to God and said, "Him declare I unto you." Christ by His life and teachings brought to human understanding the knowledge of God's will. His precepts and example unfolded to men the reality and grandeur of those truths for which they yearned. He became the satisfying answer to

what man hoped was true and to what he deemed ought to be true. The Gospel lived and taught by Christ, if hid, "It is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

"For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"God in the Gospel of His Son,
Makes His eternal counsels *known,*
Where love in all its glory shines,
And truth is drawn in fairest lines.

"Here sinners of an humble frame
May taste His grace and *learn* His name;
May read, in characters of blood,
The *wisdom,* power, and grace of God.

"Here faith reveals to mortal eyes,
A brighter world beyond the skies;
Here, shines the *light* which guides our way
From earth to realms of endless day."

3. Then, too, Christ has been made unto us the wisdom of God, in that He is the embodiment of God's plan for our supreme attainment and blessedness.

It is in and through Him that God addresses Himself to our minds and hearts. Not through nations, nor through men, nor through angels, but through Jesus Christ has God chosen to accomplish His highest purposes. God's character, especially His love, is disclosed to men in the person of His Son. By Him has God chosen to manifest His gracious design for man's present and eternal good. The answer to

the question, "What hath God wrought" is found in the exclamation of Pilate, "Behold the Man!" God's supreme accomplishment will be exposed when we are "conformed to the image of His Son." The final cause of God's infinite purpose is that "we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The acme of His wisdom is disclosed in the making of character. The goal of His purpose will be attained when "Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied," and when "we shall be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God."

"That far-off Divine event toward which the whole creation moves" will be the enrapturing consummation of which the Scriptures speak, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth—even in Him." Everything in Jesus and Jesus everything.

II. *Christ has been made unto us "righteousness."*

In what senses?

1. Christ is the standard of God's righteousness. He represents the ideals of God. In His person and work He sets forth God's conception and God's requirement. He is the beloved Son in whom God is well pleased. He is perfect conformity to God's will, not only in the eyes of men, but in the discriminate and infallible judgment of God. As we view Him, there is no beauty that *we* can desire Him. "He is the Chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely." He is the sum of all that God

requires. None less worthy than Christ could adequately convey to us the requirement of Him "who is of purer eyes than to behold evil." Christ has been made a righteousness agreeable and conformable to the will of God.

The heinousness of sin in the eyes of God presses upon the conscience of man as he judges the righteousness of God of such character as to demand the condescending life and the humiliating death of His own dear Son. That such an one should suffer the ignominy of the cross is eloquent tribute to the exacting requirements of God's standard of righteousness.

2. Christ has also been made unto us righteousness, in that His example furnishes us with a principle of action. He proclaimed and exhibited a rule of conduct, conformity to which is required of men. The embodiment of this we find in the "Golden Rule," "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." A line of conduct which effectually disposes of self-seeking, and has as its goal the greatest good to the greatest number; a course of life marked by righteous concern for the welfare of others; a rule of living that makes dominant a spirit of considerateness; that puts a premium on unselfish endeavor; that magnifies the grace of God in thought, word and deed.

3. But Christ has been made our righteousness in a far deeper sense than in the foregoing specifications. He "has been made unto us righteousness" as our substitute. He has met in our behalf the demands of God. What He has done has been placed to our credit. His perfect obedience to God has made it possible for us to rejoice in the righteousness of God as a "state called forth by God's act of justification, namely, by judicial disengagement or release from all that stands in the way of our being righteous; a

liberation of which man becomes partaker by means of faith."

He has been set forth the propitiation for our sins. He has reconciled God to man. He has appeased God's righteous revenge against sin. Vengeance belongeth unto God, and it has been met and satisfied in the obedience of His Son unto death, "even the death of the Cross."

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace. . . . That He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

This great truth furnishes unspeakable comfort to the poor helpless sinner. In it Paul rejoiced. In it Luther found his inspiration. In it the martyrs anchored the inner man, as the outward man perished in the flames of relentless persecution. A righteousness our own wrought by Christ, devised and projected by the infinite wisdom of God, making sure and final the eternal standing of believers as they are discharged of debt by the complete payment made to God by Christ, our substitute. "There is none righteous, no not one," but all are adjudged righteous because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. To the believer there is imputed a righteousness, which is all that God requires. We are justified freely by God's grace. God, by the righteousness of Christ, has vindicated His infinite justice, and at the same time made Himself the "justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Down to the very bottom of sin's desert God has gone in the person of His Son, and through Him executed a plan to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be subtracted. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness." He satisfied its demands from "Alpha" to "Omega," from beginning to end, and the precious truth is, He did this for my release

and establishment. Christ our righteousness. We have none of our own, but we have all of His. His character will be the believer's sentence at the bar of God.

"Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne."

"For nothing good have I,
Whereby Thy grace to claim,
I'll wash my garment white
In the blood of Calvary's Lamb."

"All hail! atoning blood!
All hail! redeeming grace!
All hail! the gift of Christ our Lord,
Our strength and righteousness."

III. *The Apostle declares that Christ has been made unto us "sanctification."*

In what senses?

1. One meaning of the term is consecration. A setting apart for a specific purpose. In the Old Testament the altars and sacrifices were sanctified, set apart, consecrated for the purpose of effecting Jehovah's will. Christ was sanctified to the work of atonement—chosen to suffer for the sins of His people. As a Lamb without blemish, He was slain to expiate the guilt of a sinful world.

2. Christ has been made unto us sanctification, in that through Him we are brought into saving fellowship with God. His merits set us apart as those who are to be made "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." We become, on the part of God, worthy subjects of habitual and hallowed communion with the Father of spirits. We are

taken out of the world, from under control of its spirit and maxims, and made that peculiar people whose God is the Lord. Then we are brought into fellowship with the "spirits of just men made perfect."

In the world, but not of it. Our citizenship in Heaven, and living as those who have a community of interests in the Kingdom of Grace.

3. Christ has also been made our sanctification, in that He has been elevated to glory and has given unto us the Holy Spirit as our sanctifier. The spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them unto us. By His agency the prayer of Christ is answered. "Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth." As Christ dwells in us by faith, we are enabled "more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness." As Christ is identified with us, and we with Him in righteousness, so in sanctification. Some one has said, "If, then, our righteousness is Christ *for* us, and sanctification is Christ *in* us, Christ is our holiness as well as our righteousness." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." "And every man that hath this hope purifieth himself even as He is pure." "And for their sakes I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth." "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." "We are made partakers of the divine nature," and hence the purpose disclosed by the Apostle "That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." "To present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in His sight." I do not know that a better definition of holiness could possibly be given than was once given by an unlearned, ignorant, poor man, a candidate for

the post of missionary. The examining clergyman had asked him to define justification, and he had done it to his satisfaction. The answer was a memorable one; it will be worth while to carry it away. "Sanctification, sir, is a God-possessed soul."

IV. *Then, Christ, on the part of God, has been made unto us "redemption."*

1. The literal significance of the word is "releasing for a ransom." Christ is the price paid for our liberation. "He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." God demanded Him as the price of our deliverance from the bondage under Satan into which sin brought us by the disobedience of our first parents. Mr. Moody once told of a young man whose father was a great drunkard. "He squandered his property, died, and left his wife in the poorhouse. The son toiled hard and earned money and bought back the land. He took his mother out of the poorhouse and regularly accompanied her to church. The first Adam in Eden sold us for naught; but the Messiah, the second Adam, came and bought us back again. The first Adam brought us to the poorhouse. The second Adam makes us kings and priests unto God."

2. Then Christ has made unto us redemption as the result of expiation. By Him we are delivered from the guilt and condemnation of sin. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Man is guilty before God. Sin is followed by a consciousness of pollution. The stain is left upon the soul. Witness to the terribleness of guilt in the exclamations of despair uttered by Macbeth's wife for the murder of Duncan.

"What hands are here? Ha, they pluck out mine eyes. Will all Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red. Here's the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

What a sober thought—this thought of guilt! Unless the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us we shall go into the presence of God with all the stains upon the soul that will be laid bare in that light that has no shadow, and before that tribunal from which there is neither appeal nor forgiveness.

"What can wash away my stain?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

"Oh, precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow;
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

No longer under condemnation. No sentence can be executed, for there is none to execute. Christ suffered the penalty. "Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe." "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The believers' privilege, "To stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

3. Christ is also our redemption, in that He is our complete and final deliverance. This means entrance into glory. There will be a final and decisive revelation of salvation. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "And being made perfect He became the author of *eternal salvation* unto all them that obey Him." "By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." The time will come when our vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body. Christ has loved us and given Himself for us that "He might present us unto Himself, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that we should be holy and without blemish."

What relation do we sustain to the truth we have sought to expose? This remarkable passage is true What a Truth! To reject it is the height of folly and the acme of insult to God. To seek a substitute for God's plan as the ground for our hopes must result in a pitiful tragedy. What argument can men present for attempting to do something for themselves which has already been done for them? To consider it is to discredit the plan of God conceived in infinite wisdom and executed with Divine precision.

What a salvation is ours! It is complete, wanting nothing. Let us magnify it. "And of him are ye in Christ Jesus." To be "in Him" implies two moral facts: "The act of faith, whereby man lays hold of Christ, and the community of life with Him contracted by means of this act of faith."

"O wonderful words of the Gospel
O wonderful message they bring,
Proclaiming a blessed redemption
Through Jesus our Saviour and King.

"Believe, oh, believe in His mercy,
That flows like a fountain so free;
Believe and receive the redemption
He offers to you and to me."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. *Amen.*"

II

SIN *and* SALVATION

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—I. Tim. 1:15.

Man the sinner, and Christ the Saviour. These two facts are vitally and inevitably associated in the Word of God. They are also confirmed in human experience.

Paul knew the fact of sin, and he knew the fact of salvation. Christ by His Spirit had come into his life and had transformed him. He was a new man in Christ Jesus.

Once Saul, now Paul. Paul was not an evolution of Saul. He was born Saul and he was born Paul. "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Paul had the scriptural view of sin and salvation. It is my purpose in this message to present some thoughts on Sin and Salvation as revealed in the Scriptures.

I. *A scriptural view of sin is necessary to an acceptance of salvation.*

Sin is something with which every man has to deal. It is not a figment of the imagination. It is not simply a weakness incident to human life. It is not an excusable imperfection. Sin is an awful fact—the most stubborn, the most terrible of all realities. Whatever may be our views as to sin's origin, no reasonable person can fail to be impressed with its baneful and universal prevalence.

Sin is a problem that has challenged the thought of philosophers, statesmen and theologians. With it the nation, the state, the city, the community and the home have

to deal. We see its results in the prisons of our country, in the asylums for the demented, in the dens of vice, in the huts of poverty, in the emaciated cheeks, in the separation of loved ones, in the oppression of the poor, in the disregard of human life, in the methods of business, in the corruption of politics, in the desecration of the Sabbath, in the abandonment of religion, in rebellion against God. A single sin drove from eternal felicity and hurled a spotless soul from the battlements of heaven and brought death and disease and all the woes to which humanity is subject.

To deny sin's presence and the awful consequences that follow in its commission is to admit that we are incapable of making any observation that invites the attention of a reasonable being. No individual can intelligently refuse a careful and scriptural consideration of this awful monster which has slain its thousands and which stands ever ready to bring death and disaster and ruin inevitable to all who view it with complacency and who make no effort to extricate themselves from its ever-tightening grasp. I need not attempt to prove to an intelligent being that sin destroys the body. Thousands of physicians and patients bear testimony to this awful truth.

I would that all might see that sin destroys something more precious even than this body, which God has so wondrously fashioned. God's Word says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." It is important that we should entertain a profound conviction of this truth, for unless we do we will not make use of the only means of escape from the fearful destruction of the soul.

What is sin? "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." "Any want of conformity unto the law of God" is a sin of omission. "Any transgression of the law of God" is a sin of commission.

"The law of God." Sin has directly to do with "the law of God." It is true that when I sin I injure myself, I injure my fellowman, but it is true with awful import that in sinning I violate the law of God. I challenge His right of sovereignty over and proprietorship in me. I am a rebellious subject. I am a law unto myself. I set at naught all His counsel. We may say that the very attribute of God which he guards most jealously is the one which by sin man most flagrantly offends, even His infinite holiness.

Men are not so much opposed to God on account of His sovereignty. They rather contemplate with delight His almighty power. They do not object to His wisdom. They find much comfort in the justice, which is the habitation of His throne. They are to some extent appreciative of His goodness. They bear testimony to the truth for which He stands. His enemies are willing to admit concerning His Son, His manifestation, "Never man spake like this man," but it is the holiness of God that offends man and why? Because man takes pleasure in sin. God cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance. Man takes pleasure in beholding sin and in the indulgence of his sinful appetites.

Before man will accept salvation he must come to regard sin as offensive to God's holiness. He must have the conviction of the Psalmist, that sin is primarily against God, and in the full consciousness of his guilt he must cry out, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight."

Nothing short of such a conception of sin will impel a man to seek salvation. Sin is a violation of God's law, hence penalty is attached. It is an offense to God's holiness, hence cleansing is required. There must be a profound conviction of the nature of sin before the conscience can be aroused to the necessity of salvation. "It was a significant

remark made by Tholuck, that in reviewing the manifold blessings which God had bestowed upon him during a long life, the one thing for which he had most to thank Him was the conviction of sin. In the presence of a vast assembly he was not ashamed to confess that the personal consciousness of sin as seen in the illumination thrown upon it by the Holy Ghost was the chiefest of the blessings which God had vouchsafed to him in the mercy of his Heavenly Father."

If conviction of sin be necessary to acceptance of salvation, and if the Spirit of God, who is given to convince of sin, uses only the Gospel of Christ, how imperative the duty upon ministers to "preach the Word," and the Word only. To resort to human inventions as expedients must and should result in failure. Such a course is to reflect upon God's wisdom and to discredit the means He has appointed.

If the Gospel does not rescue men, then they are not to be safely secured for the possession and service of the Master. Whenever we substitute for God's instrument something devised by man He leaves us to the ignominious failure we deserve. Not only so, we lower the standard in the face of those designated for our assistance, and thus do the cause and the persons we seek to benefit irreparable injury. Other expedients may attract the natural tastes of men, but they do not appeal to the crying need of the soul.

We should put the stress where it belongs. Man is a sinner, and what he needs and must have is salvation from sin. This the Gospel of Christ, and this Gospel only, provides for. It is God's merciful instrument for the deliverance of men from sin.

Let us have the view of sin held by a holy God, taught by a perfect Saviour, and enlightened by the Divine Spirit. In this conception of sin do we find an urgent reason for

preaching the Gospel of Christ, and an impelling motive for seeking that salvation which is essential to our deliverance from sin's guilt and power and ultimate presence.

II. *A scriptural view of sin is necessary to reconciliation with God.*

How awful the thought of not being reconciled with God! We can only faintly realize this by the thought of being out of harmony with our fellowmen. Call to mind the terrible pain and anguish that accompany the enmity that exists between members of the same family. What feelings of bitterness cherished by a father and son who refuse to be reconciled! What disturbance of mind and heaviness of soul when by some grievous misunderstanding a mother and daughter have severed the sweet and tender relationship that ought to be sustained between them! How children of God destroy their own heart peace, deny to the world the teachings of the precious Saviour, stir up strife, reproach the name of the Master, and dishonor their heavenly Father when they allow differences to make impossible that fellowship which is so essential to the advancement of religion!

How sweet that reconciliation that takes place between members of a once-united family! How precious and far-reaching in wholesome influence that reconciliation made between the professing children of God who have refused to throw the mantle of charity over each other's faults!

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And so fulfill his word!"

If enmity between earthly friends is so charged with dreadful consequences, what ought to be the sad realization of enmity with God, Who made us, Who gave His Son for our redemption, and Who is ever ready to stretch forth His strong arm for our defense?

If reconciliation between father and son, mother and daughter, brethren in Christ, is so fraught with peace and joy, what must be the joy of that soul which is made to span, by Divine grace, that impassable gulf between itself and God? The result is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." What can be more desirable than reconciliation with God? How can we live without the assurance of our Father's pleasure in His children? A refusal to be reconciled means that God is displeased with our conduct; that we are regarded by Him as rebellious subjects; that we are engaged in sin. We can but go our way with the awful consciousness of our Father's frown. What child can experience satisfaction in anything, however inviting, when he is painfully conscious that his mother is not reconciled to him because of his acts contrary to her bidding and in violation of that authority which as mother she has the right to wield?

What being here on earth can be satisfied with a course of life that bids defiance to the law of God, the example of Christ, and the beseechings of the Holy Spirit?

Reconciliation must take place. We can't live in peace without God's favor. We can't die in triumph without the consciousness of God's presence. We can't sit with the Saviour on His throne unless we are one with Him in the love and complacency of the Father.

Can this reconciliation take place? Yes, God has made a great sacrifice that we might be reconciled—even the

death of His own dear Son. There is only one way by which this reconciliation can be effected.

We must view sin as God views it. We must believe that that sacrifice Christ made for sin was necessary. The atonement of Christ must be real. The Cross must be magnetic to the soul. The blood shed for the remission of sin must be applied. We can never be reconciled to God so long as we disregard the means by which He has made reconciliation possible. God Himself has taken the initiative in this all-important matter of reconciliation. He is the party offended. We have sinned; we deserve no mercy. He is not compelled, even in order to vindicate His character, to offer us the means of reconciliation; but "mercy seasons justice," and He condescends to make an overture of peace in the satisfaction of the Cross. Can we not see the absurdity of trying to effect reconciliation with God on any other basis than the sacrifice of His Son? A man may live a moral life, but that can never reconcile him to God. The very fact that he is depending on a moral life for reconciliation only adds in the sight of God, insult to injury. The man proposes his terms of reconciliation in opposition to God's terms. To seek in any other way reconciliation with God bids defiance to His plan and sets at naught the wisdom of an infinite God and a loving Father. The highest manifestation, the supreme expression, of that wisdom is Jesus Christ "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood."

How can man ever hope to be reconciled with God unless he gives his "assent of mind and consent of heart" to the marvelous plan that makes it possible for God to be "just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus?" Hear God's Word: "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." "For

He is our peace who hath made both one." . . . "That He might reconcile both unto God in one body *by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*" The enmity between God and the sinner is slain by the Cross; therefore, reconciliation can only take place as we associate that Cross with sin which drove Christ to it. We *must* accept the provision for reconciliation, even Christ, Who was nailed to the cross.

"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Since God is the offended one, we *must* accept the means He has ordained for reconciliation. We can't be reconciled to Him either in time or in eternity unless we have a scriptural view of sin. That view consists in regarding sin as offensive to God; in the personal acceptance of Christ as the salvation from sin, and in the thought that through Christ, and Him alone, can God be propitiated, we be "made nigh by His blood," and reinstated into God's favor.

III. *A scriptural view of sin is necessary to an appreciation of God's grace.*

How profoundly did Paul appreciate that grace by which he was brought "out of darkness into His marvelous light!"

A man is hopelessly in debt. By his own wastefulness he has become involved far beyond his ability to pay. His creditors are pressing him on every side. They threaten to sell the very necessities of life. There is only one person to whom he can go with the slightest hope of assistance. This person has the credit and the means that will be accepted in behalf of the distressed debtor. But the debtor remembers that instead of having a claim on this man of wealth he has forfeited even his good-will by flagrant criticisms and aggressive hostilities. The debtor, however, is in despair, and this man's mercy and generosity are his

only hope. He places his case before him. The man hears with profound sympathy as the pitiful story is related. He says to him, "You have no claim on me; you have done me many injuries; nevertheless, I will not remember them, I will discharge your obligations and relieve you of your oppressive burden." The poor debtor cannot express his appreciation. He begins to contrast his present and former situation. His appreciation is measured in the light of his former distress and his present joy, his former contraction and his present expansion. He can only adequately appreciate his friend's generosity by a proper conception of his once helpless condition and the consciousness of his previous bitter feeling against the man who has shown himself such a gracious benefactor.

Now, it is "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." We by sin have forfeited our claim to any generosity on His part. He has the Divine right to leave us in our pitiable state, but He chooses to display His unmerited favor and so make it possible for us to have the burden of sin lifted from our hearts.

It was a stupendous undertaking on the part of God. Centuries passed from its inception until its execution. God must devise some plan in keeping with His own character, and satisfactory to all interests, for man's redemption, or sinners must be left in their perishing condition. He decides to give His Son as a Saviour. He knew no sin. "Though He was rich, yet He became poor that we through His poverty might be rich."

He became incarnate; mingled with fallen humanity; was opposed by His own people; designated an imposter; wounded in the house of His friends; forsaken by His disciples; betrayed; scourged; reviled. An unjust judge passes an unjust sentence upon One he knows, and repeatedly as-

serts, is a just man. The crown of thorns is placed upon His head. He is led away to Calvary, placed upon a cross and there, while darkness reigns over all the earth, accompanied with rending veil, quaking earth, opening graves, isolated from man and God, He goes out of the world between a gateway of two thieves. All this that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation" might appear unto all men.

The grace of God can only be appreciated in proportion to our realization of sin as viewed by God, measured and demonstrated in the substitutionary sacrifice of His Son on Calvary's cross.

SIN WROUGHT CHAOS IN GOD'S UNIVERSE

It offended His majesty and "set at naught all His counsel." Sin turned man against his Maker. By sin he lost his inheritance, marred the image in which he was made and stood before God as an ingrate.

Now God, through Christ, brings order out of chaos, light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, life from death, and salvation from destruction. He undertakes to right our wrong; to make straight what we have made crooked; to make pure what we have defiled; to mend what we have broken; to strengthen what we have weakened; to redeem what we have lost. He does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, and yet we are responsible to Him for the very indebtedness which He proposes to discharge.

Sin, so grievous to Him, brought us into such a condition, and it cost the blood of God's own and only Son to satisfy the demands of Divine justice and meet the need of the human soul.

GRACE BRINGS RECONCILIATION

From enmity to God, Christ brings us into reconciliation. We who deserve His righteous wrath, and get only our dues if banished from His presence, are shown mercy that we may escape from our sins. "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us." Christ bears "*our* sins in His own body on the tree." Jesus pays *our* hopeless debt. The Man of God gives us to share in the purchased possession. He becomes the miracle of grace, and stands forth challenging our admiration and meriting our highest commendation.

Paul was in a position to appreciate this grace. He knew what a sinner he had been. He remembered how at his feet were laid the clothes of those who stoned the faithful Stephen. He remembered the deep conviction of sin as he heard the voice: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" I am your Saviour. I am your justifier. I am He who suffered for you on Calvary. No wonder he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Recalling his former sins, the grace of God was magnified in his salvation.

It is an "amazing grace" that saves, because we are taken from such a fathomless depth to such a measureless height. Christ fathomed the depth of sin in that hour when He cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Christ scaled the height of redemption when He ascended into heaven, "where he sitteth on the right hand of God."

We can appreciate God's grace only by keeping ever before us the scriptural and awful nature of sin. Paul, not

Saul, could think of himself only as a great sinner redeemed by an all-sufficient Saviour. The nearer he really came into the blessed likeness of Christ the deeper his consciousness of sin, and the more earnest his purpose to attribute his salvation solely to the grace of God. His face shone, but he "wist it not."

A writer has observed that "when comparatively a young Christian he wrote, 'I am the least of the apostles.' After he had grown in grace a few years he could say, 'I am less than the least of all saints.' When he had grown old in God's service he could subscribe himself the 'chief of sinners.' " Paul's tribute to God's grace was "of whom I am chief." This was the matchless peroration of his consecrated life, his expressed appreciation of the "grace of God that bringeth salvation." This his verdict when "the time of his departure was at hand." This the accompaniment of the "spirits of just men made perfect" as they sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing."

IV. *A scriptural view of sin is necessary to efficient Christian service.*

The strength of evil furnishes an incentive to Christian endeavor. Influences seeking to destroy are met with forces struggling to prevent the catastrophe.

The people who live in the lowlands along the Mississippi River are habitually preparing to resist the force of that mighty stream. They make use of the most powerful means at their disposal to keep within bounds those swollen waters that threaten the destruction of property and the devastation of homes.

The great forest fires are raging, sweeping, in their appalling fury, trees, fences and all kinds of valuable property from the face of the earth. They challenge the utmost efforts of men whose possessions are exposed to the relentless flames. Men sleep when there is no realization of danger. They are aroused when they are made to see the awful perils that threaten disaster. When the angry clouds are gathering and the storm king is abroad we seek a shelter. When the cyclone is rumbling and twisting and hurling everything in its mad course to ruin, we make the best possible arrangements for safety. When the earthquake shakes the foundations and great buildings are crashing and crumbling, the whole being is keenly sensible of impending death.

These elements have within them destructive power, and men are driven to the task of selecting the most efficient means of resistance. The same holds true in the sphere of the religious.

If we have false views of sin, we sit with calm indifference to its effects. We resist it with all our ransomed powers only when we are sensible of its ruinous tendencies.

The man who only takes the social drink is not awake to the evil that lurks in the tempting glass. But when he has created an appetite that clamors for constant gratification he is aroused to the strength of a habit which he is powerless to resist. He then struggles to overcome, but he has a giant with which to deal. Those persons who observe and experience the heart-rending consequences of sin are urged to active resistance.

The Apostle Paul was an efficient servant of God because he knew the power of sin. He could not do enough for his Saviour because he had done so much against Him. He went "bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem" because, with

the power of Christ, he would break the shackles of sin with which his fellowmen were hopelessly grappling. He was willing to suffer perils of all descriptions that he might persuade men to accept the remedy provided for sin. So profound was his conviction of sin and its awful consequences to those who were sin's victims he uttered the statement, startling in dramatic intensity and self-abandonment, "I could wish myself accursed for my brethren and companions' sake."

Why is it that so many professing Christians are doing nothing for the cause of righteousness? We find an answer: They do not realize the truth which they profess to believe.

Why do men go about their daily avocations dealing with immortal beings with such culpable and lamentable indifference, not suggesting by word or life the principles of the Saviour? Is it not because they have meager and unscriptural views of sin? Why do we find men in the pulpit without power to influence to a better life? Is it not because they themselves have not the conviction of sin they would impress upon the minds and hearts of their hearers? Why so many drones in the Church of God? Is it not because they have not tasted of the sweetness of that peace of which Christ speaks when He assures of personal deliverance from sin?

When we are fully aroused to the enormity of guilt and the hopelessness of the victims of sin, then, and not until then, will we be unremitting toilers in the service of the Lord.

The world does not, and cannot believe, that we believe her devotees are in great danger if we fail to make strenuous effort to rescue them.

Men will risk life to save life. A boat is capsized. A man is hopelessly struggling in the water; a companion on the shore plunges to his rescue, and in the attempt to save loses his own life.

What impelled him to the rescue? A realization of the man's danger. Men, immortal souls are dying all around us. What will impel us to their rescue? A realization of the imminent and awful danger. How may we be brought to this realization? By a scriptural conception of sin. Sin, the disease of the soul which has only one remedy, "The salvation which is in Christ Jesus."

When will the Church of God meet the demand for missionaries to preach the Gospel in the lands of darkness? When she realizes that sin is destroying thousands in those pitiable domains.

When will you and I struggle heroically and unceasingly to put away all sin? When we are profoundly impressed with the thought of sin's disastrous and dishonoring results. When our deliberate sentence under an enlightened conscience is "Of whom I am chief." We enthrone Christ when we dethrone sin. We seek to establish righteousness when we seek to overthrow sin. We are efficient servants of the Master when we are seized with Christ's matchless compassion for the world and with the consciousness of sin's desert in the light of His crucifixion agony. Lord, may we see ourselves as Thou dost see us! May we know Thee as a God of infinite holiness! May we have such scriptural and profound conviction of sin that we will be impelled to Thy salvation, reconciled to Thyself, appreciative of Thy Grace, and "workmen that need not be ashamed."

III

The LOGIC *of* FAITH

"Have faith in God."—MARK 11:22.

I ONCE had a very interesting and profitable conversation with one of the most distinguished lawyers in Georgia. We talked about his profession and also about the vocation of the Gospel ministry. He said that no other profession afforded such a compensative field for personal research and intellectual gratification as that of the ministry. In proof of this statement he said that much of the individuality in his profession had been discounted by the significant helps that had been prepared. He said that a lawyer at the present time could commit to some one in his office the duty of going over the records and ascertaining the points applicable to the case in hand. He informed me that his wife was of valuable assistance in this work. In the course of the conversation, he said, "If I were a preacher, I would prepare sermons on the primary elements in the Christian religion. I would preach on such practical subjects as Faith, Hope, Love, and Joy." There is much wisdom in the suggestion.

The religion of Christ is intensely practical. I sometimes fear that ministers frequently obscure the real and vital issues of practical Christianity by attempting learned dissertations on abstract subjects. There is a glorious life to live, and with its constituent elements we ought to be, and must be, thoroughly familiar. Dr. George B. Stevens has some important thoughts on the determining quality of our idea of God. He says, "There is nothing on which our whole conception of life and its meaning so much depends

as upon the idea of the character of God which we cherish. Little as we think of it, each day is bitter or hopeful; every sacrifice irksome or joyous; in short, every day's work full of low and selfish meanings or of noble and divine meanings, according to the idea of the character of God which we carry about with us day by day. The word life means to us what the word God means to us."

Now the quality and quantity of our faith must determine in large measure our conception of God. Faith is not only an important element in the Christian religion, it is the very foundation of it, and there cannot be genuine and evangelical piety without it. It is no easy matter to give in a few words an accurate definition of faith. We might say "Faith is the acceptance of testimony." This at once, you will see, makes faith something reasonable. "Faith in God is that supreme exercise of the soul in which it accepts as true the words of Jehovah, and in its comprehensiveness embraces a willing obedience to His commands."

What kind of testimony is faith asked to receive? It is the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Is this testimony creditable? Time forbids an exhaustive answer. We may, I think, find in the triumphs of faith a sufficient answer to all that are open to conviction. The martyrs assent. The spread of the Gospel answers in the affirmative. The enduring fame of the apostles, who would have been unhonored and unsung today had they not linked their fortunes with Jesus Christ, speaks an emphatic yes. Tried by every test the testimony that Biblical faith requires, is credible. This virtue of faith, as well as all other virtues, must be tried by the Word of God. The basis on which Christian argument must rest is "The word of God which lives and abides forever." If there is anything true in the universe,

it is God's Word. This can be established by its own internal evidence.

My purpose is to present some thoughts on this subject—"The Logic of Faith." I do not go beyond the truth when I say there is much unbelief among believers. How few there are who accept as heartily the word of God as they do the word of man! We read a history written by a fallible man, and the supposed facts it contains are usually accepted by us as facts. The discernment of this man comes to him from God and we receive what he says as truth, and doubt the truth of the author of his being. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." There are those who believe there was a God in the days of Creation. They believe that Noah and Abraham and Moses lived. They believe in Christ as an historical character. Then why should we doubt any truth disclosed in the word of God? God is an eternal Now. With Him there is neither Past, Present, nor Future. "He is the same yesterday, today and forever." If He ever was, He is now. His stately steppings through the centuries have been uninterrupted. The testimony that challenges our Faith is stronger today than ever before. Prophecies have been fulfilled since those Old Testament worthies walked with God. Much they believed was what God said would come to pass. Much you and I are asked to believe has already been accomplished. They lived in the twilight. We live in the morning dawn, if not in the noonday splendor. We see more of God's character than they saw, for His Son, "who was in the bosom of the Father had declared Him unto us." God was vexed with them for their unbelief. Can He behold with complacency our lack of faith? When they failed to meet His requirements, He marked them unexcused. If we doubt Him will He not say "Therefore, thou

art inexcusable, O man." If faith is something logical and reasonable, then I am unreasonable and illogical if I fail to exercise it. If I am unreasonable and illogical, then I must be held accountable, and not God, for my lack of faith. Sometimes lack of faith is due to lack of information, and lack of information is due to lack of interest, and certainly for lack of interest in things pertaining to God's glory and my own eternal welfare I will be held accountable.

Now, let us look at some of the demands of logical faith, and seek some enlightenment from the testimony of God's inspired word.

THE NEGATIVE STATEMENT

1. *"Logical faith does not demand what God has denied."* Some things are true and some things are not true. What God affirms and what God denies, irrespective of our opinion, must stand.

(a) God has denied that a man can be saved in his sins. Christ came to save from sin, but He made no promise to save in sin. "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." There are natural laws and there are spiritual laws. The author of both is God. The Spiritual is above the natural. What God is and has done in the natural world is grand, but more startling and stupendous are the laws and purposes of God in the spiritual realm. It costs more to redeem than it does to create. Natural life is the product of creation. Spiritual life is the product of redemption. If the law in the natural world rebels against its violator, will not the law in the spiritual world contend with greater energy for its supremacy? If the laws of nature are immutable, are not the laws of spirit unchangeable? Now, for the preservation of natural life

certain things must be avoided and certain things must be done. Man only in a certain relation is monarch of all he surveys. He can cross the ocean in a steamer, but he cannot wrestle successfully with the seething billows if he is thrown overboard. He can use the electric car as a means of conveyance, but the current in contact with his body results in his death. In the proper relation with God he can command the blessings of His Spiritual kingdom, but out of harmony with God his life must be of baffling uncertainty, and ultimately of eternal discord. But, you say, the kingdom of nature is one of law, and the kingdom of spirit one of grace. With gratitude I greet the question. This is an argument for the claims of Christ. This is the explanation of His appearance on the scene. This is the why and the wherefore of His atonement. Law demanded penalty swift and exact. Man couldn't keep the law. Jesus Christ, in our stead, met its requirements, and through the faith that is in Him we may be delivered from its condemnation. Christ is the *ne plus ultra* of God's effort for the redemption of lost humanity. In His person and work He is the "much more" that marks the superiority of Grace over Law—of the spiritual over the natural. He is the mercy of God in the disclosure of Grace. God is too merciful, says someone, to allow any of His creatures to suffer. This is true within certain limits. His mercy is as boundless as the infinite love and sacrifice of His Son. That law representing justice might not wreak its vengeance on us all; mercy appears in the person of Christ. He is the supreme and ultimate expression, not of man's, but of God's measureless mercy. The Cross of Christ measures and demonstrates God's infinite mercy. This being true, isn't it reasonable that God should deny salvation to those who reject the appreciation of His excellent character and the appropria-

tion of His sacrificial benefits? In the natural world one who does not sow cannot reap. A denial of this is illogical. In the spiritual world one who does not sow cannot reap. A denial of this is equally illogical. In the natural world the seed in which there is life must be planted in the soil, if the production after its kind is to come forth. In the spiritual world the germ of divine life, which is Christ, must be planted in the soul, if spiritual and eternal life are to be the harvest. "Christ in you the hope of glory." Someone says, "All this talk about God being such a God of love that He passes lightly over sin is the misunderstanding of what love is. Love is the sworn foe of sin forever, and the instant God begins to excuse sin, as we are too often rashly doing, He proves He does not love man. If God excuses sin in me and lets me go on just saying, 'well, he is frail and infirm—it does not matter,' God Himself, by such action, insures my sin."

(b) He does not bless a godless and selfish life.

If my end and aim in life be self I need not complain that I stop short with the attainment. My reward can be nothing beyond what the self life is able to furnish. I measure my capacity by my aspirations. I invite the exclusion of God from my life and He accepts the invitation. He denies his spiritual blessings to a selfish life, and a logical faith must reasonably assent.

(c) God denies the riches of His grace to a divided life.

Men say, I can grasp Him with one hand and hold on to the world with the other. I can have my treasures on earth and I can have them in heaven. I can live both here and there. "Our citizenship is in Heaven." God says, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

We must have an eye single to His honor and glory, He asks for supremacy in our affections. He demands a monopoly of our energies. To serve God acceptably and effectively, our hearts must be consecrated, our aim must be single.

(d) God does not prosper a selfish Church.

He demands the concentrated purpose and energy of its entire membership. He wants its allegiance constant and pronounced. He puts a premium on heartfelt enthusiasm. "These things saith the Amen—the faithful and true witness—the beginning of the Creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art luke-warm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." It is more than unfortunate that evils inaugurated by men and women of the world have the sanction and participation of professing Christians. "For so is the will of God that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." God's child is to avoid the very appearance of evil. God's people are "A Peculiar People, zealous of good works." The virtues we assume we ought to have and manifest. The effort to crown evil with respectability does not diminish, but augments its baneful influence. The standard of morality and Christianity in any community can rise no higher than that which is maintained by its representative and influential members. The light cannot shine brightly through a smoked lamp chimney nor can the light of God shine through a church bedimmed with worldliness and selfishness. Is it not true that the light in many of our churches today has become darkness? How great is that darkness! God who dwells in light can only know. Ours is not merely to think, but to act—not only to plan, but to

accomplish—not only to receive, but to give—not to squander the messages from the sacred desk, but to proclaim them to others by holy deeds and righteous living. The Church that God has ordained to bless is one imbued with the missionary spirit of Christ, the knowledge of whom His disciples are commanded to diffuse throughout the earth. God's requirements are for all time. No amount of human ingenuity and indolence can cancel the great commission of the Savior—"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Logical faith can make no other demand. "Have faith in God." Believe that what He has denied is eternally false.

2. *"Logical faith does not demand what God has not promised."*

"His mercy may give many blessings He has not promised, but correct reasoning will advise putting ourselves within the promises." "And being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform."

A child of God says: "My faith in God is weak. He has taken away one of my loved ones." Did He promise to preserve any from physical death? Certainly not. He has ordained the very opposite. "All flesh is as grass." "Every path, though it may wander through scenes varied and many must converge at last into the valley of the shadow." Death is a part of the Divine plan. The apostle mentions it in his enumeration of things possessed by the believer. "All are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life or death." Another says: "My faith is about to fail me. My burdens are so heavy—my sorrows so deep—my afflictions so grievous." Did God promise that they should be otherwise? He has told you what to do—"Cast thy burden on the Lord and He shall sustain thee." "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good comfort; I have

overcome the world." The discipline of life is necessary and wholesome. You wouldn't say to your child: "Go and do as you please, and I promise you I will never correct you—I will never chastise you." What a lamentable lack of real love such a spirit would disclose! God is wiser and better than we. Is His lack of interest in us so appalling that He would withhold His restraint to prevent us from headlong destruction? Not so—not so—thank God! Logical faith does not demand freedom from discipline, which is a glorious provision in the economy of grace. Logical faith expects suffering. Logical faith demands sorrow. Logical faith invites adversity. Logical faith exacts bereavement. Logical faith challenges the ministry of discipline.

The missionaries are not promised freedom from disease, or from martyrdom. Christ gave His life in witnessing to the truth, and for this reason He is precious to the soul. The noblest institution on earth today is the Church of God. It was bought with the blood of our Redeemer. I quote from an article entitled "The Martyrs' Legacy to the Church": "The only way the church can honor the martyrs whom she sent forth from her bosom is to finish the work which they laid down." Does the church accept her legacy? What is this murmuring—never send another missionary there? These lives are too valuable to be thrown away. Too valuable lives!! The Lord Jesus Christ is answer to that. He threw Himself away on a cruel, wicked world. Who is dismayed? Not those who went forth. One who escaped the fate of his associates wrote, We were not worthy to be martyrs. There was not one Christian in Sumatra when Henry Lyman perished at the hands of Batta cannibals. When the terrible truth reached his mother, she rose up from her bed in Northampton exclaiming, "Oh, those poor people; how much they need the gospel!" Peter Links,

a Manaqua, said to the Wesleyan missionaries, "O, that I could find the murderer who took my brother's life?" "Suppose you could find the man; what would you do to him?" "Do to him?" answered this African, "I would bring him to the station that he might hear the Gospel and be converted to God." Hear two mothers of missionaries: "Though at times it seems as if our hearts would break, we cannot but praise the Lord that He permitted them to do so much for Him. If His cause is to be glorified by the sacrifice of their young lives, His will be done." And another: "The earthward side of my dear one's death is very dark, mysterious, but I thank God for the glory of the heavenward side." "What a Master we serve!" These testimonies are the demands of a logical faith. Such sacrifice and such glory bear witness to the truth of God's word. You and I may choose not to suffer as they did, but if so we shall have to content ourselves with less glory than that which they shall enjoy. A faith that demands what God has not promised, virtually denies the truth of His Holy Word. "The church cannot lag for the unbelievers in her ranks. Up with her banner!" "God buries the worker, but carries on the work." Every grave in missionary lands should be vindicated by winning human souls from idols to worship of the living God. A logical faith does not deny suffering. It admits suffering and finds a satisfactory explanation with Paul in his inspired utterance: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

3. "Reasonable faith does not expect what God has promised except on the conditions attached."

You would judge a man unbalanced if he should say he could eat without conveying the food to his mouth—that

he could secure an education without thought and study—that he could walk without using his limbs—that he could sleep without closing his eyes. The same absurdities hold true in things spiritual. Certain conditions must inevitably be met. If I would be saved, I must repent of my sins, forsake them and turn to God. If I would be blessed by the ministrations on the Sabbath, I must be "In the Spirit on the Lord's Day." Reasonable faith does not demand a model Sabbath school when the majority of the church members do not attend. Reasonable faith does not demand a prosperous Christian Endeavor Society when many members pledged to its support are habitually absent. Reasonable faith does not demand a flourishing prayer-meeting when numbers make no effort to attend. God bless the faithful few and may their sturdy band increase! Reasonable faith does not expect the conversion of loved ones unless those interested in their salvation plead the promises. Reasonable faith does not demand the conversion of the children when their parents tell them they are too young to join the church and refuse to require their habitual attendance on the preaching services of the sanctuary. Reasonable faith does not demand a knowledge of God's will when the Bible remains on the shelf covered with dust. Reasonable faith does not expect unbelievers to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," when professing Christians violate it in multitudinous ways, seeking their own pleasure. Reasonable faith does not demand the calm equipoise and hallowing influence of a Christian home where there is no family altar. Reasonable faith does not demand an entrance into the "marriage supper with the Bridegroom" when there is no oil in the vessel. Reasonable faith does not demand the priceless possession of strong, symmetrical

Christian character, when the means for its formation, as God has ordained, are disregarded, and hence unused.

THE POSITIVE STATEMENT

1. *"Having met the conditions, we must expect all He has promised."*

All He has promised. Anything less is unbelief and we make God false. To offend Him in one particular is to offend Him in all.

(a) This applies to both wicked and righteous. God says, "He that believeth not is condemned already." To doubt this is to call into question the veracity of God. Jesus Christ says, "Except you repent ye shall all likewise perish." To doubt this is to question the word of Him who said, "I am the Truth." Whatever may be our conception of separation from God, the solemn fact remains that the soul apart from union with Christ is forever wandering abroad unsatisfied. Christian, do you believe this? Then, in the name of Christ who died to save, and in the name of the love we bear to our dear ones and to our fellowmen, let us seek to persuade them to find peace and pardon in believing in the "None other name" of our adorable Lord. God makes promises to the wicked as well as to the righteous. He will be as good as His word.

2. *How surprising and surpassing God's promises to those who believe.*

"He that believeth shall inherit all things." "All things are yours." Not some, but all.

(a) Temporal.—"I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

(b) Spiritual.—Do you doubt the forgiveness of your sins? The basis of assurance is God's word. "Thy sins are forgiven." "Thy Son liveth." "All things work together for good to them that love God." That's God's word; that's true. I may not understand, but God does. A physician prescribes a certain medicine for me to take. It is composed of several ingredients. One or more of these is a deadly poison. He tells me that working together, the effects will not be ill, but good. He knows; I do not. The cup of sorrow which I drink may seem to me a poison, but it is mixed by the Great Physician. "The cup which my Father gives me, shall I not drink it?" The sorrow and the joy, the adversity and the prosperity, the pleasure and the pain, the weal and the woe, are all "working together" for my good. Paul said his imprisonment had turned out "rather to the furtherance of the Gospel." This is to those who love the Lord.

"The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice. Let the multitudes of the isles be glad, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." "Have faith in God." What is the strength of your faith? "No man can be said to believe any more than he earnestly makes effort to practice and accomplish. We really believe that which we live. Truth sincerely and heartily believed governs the whole life. Inwrought and powerful convictions mould the character and force the life along the lines of that faith." "Have faith in God." Such only is the reasonable solution of the world in which we live. Such only is the logical demand of our physical, intellectual and spiritual composition. Such only is the "anchor of the soul," which otherwise is tossed helplessly and hopelessly on the rough sea of life. "I believe God." This gave the star of Paul its constraining ascendency in the midst of threatened mutiny on the storm-swept Mediter-

ranean. "Have faith in God." This you have in your precious mother. Ah! do you not know that her beautiful character, which challenges your confidence, has been made by the spirit of God as He has formed in her "Christ the hope of Glory." "Have faith in God." It's the demand of logic; it's as unerring and inevitable as the axioms of mathematics. It's the earnest of immortality. Logical faith turns to God, as the compass needle to the polar star.

Reason may sit on the Throne of the Intellect. Faith wears the crown in the Throne-room of the Soul.

"Have faith in God."

IV

The CHURCH *of the* LIVING GOD

"The church of the living God."—I. Tim. 3:15.

Are Christians giving the Church the exalted place she ought to hold in their affections?

May the Lord "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance."

If our love and reverence for the Church are not pronounced, certainly we can't expect sympathy with her purposes on the part of those who are not allied with her interests. No other organization the world has ever known has been subjected to such persistent and merciless criticism as the Church of God. This is doubtless due in large measure to two reasons:

First. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Men unrenewed by Divine grace give vent in natural antipathy to an organization which necessarily antagonizes their wills and their ways.

Second. The very nature of the Church demands the highest evidences of her mission; and because, presumably, unto her much is given, of her also much is required.

In consideration, therefore, of the Church's designated purpose in the world, we should recognize the supremacy and singularity of her mission.

There is no other organization in the same class with the Church. Some of them may serve useful purposes when held to a legitimate sphere, but it is a very easy matter for well-meaning persons to exalt them to a standard which they do not and cannot maintain. None of them, nor all of them combined, are co-ordinate institutions with

the Church; and if not carefully guarded, they are apt to become in the minds of some a menacing compromise.

The point I wish to emphasize is this: that active participation in other organizations cannot be substituted for the services which every man, woman and child owes to the "Church of the living God." Men and women may be exemplary and inspiring members of human organizations and yet incapable of that spiritual influence which church membership demands and encourages.

There are scriptural, and therefore sufficient, reasons for the singularity and supremacy of the Church as an organization.

1. *The Church is a Divine institution.*

Our Lord on one occasion asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" and Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." In response, Jesus said, "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "This Rock," the inspired personal conviction lying behind and in the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The Master's own declaration constitutes and designates the Church as the Divine institution through which the purposes of God toward humanity are to be executed.

The numerous scriptural names given to the Church emphasize her Divine origin, such as "Church of God," "General Assembly of the Firstborn," "Branch of God's Planting," "Bride of Christ," "Lamb's Wife," "Strength and Glory of God," etc. The Church, then, is the one institution that moves in the calm and courageous consciousness that she has been launched by a Divine Captain whose Om-

nific hand is at the helm, and whose passengers are destined for a definite port.

The mission of the Church is clear-cut and well-defined. The logic of her principles is the temporal and spiritual good of men, especially the cultivation and development of man's spiritual nature.

The radical difference between the Church and all other organizations is that the primary purpose of the Church is to reach the souls of men, and the primary purpose of other organizations is to minister to the bodies of men. The Church stands pre-eminently for the spirtiual. The Church interprets the need of man in the light of eternity, other organizations his need in the light of time. Incidentally, some fraternal organizations may look to the spiritual; pre-eminently, the Church ministers to the spiritual man.

The Church recognizes that there is something radically wrong with humanity—something that human hands are too infirm and human arms too short to remedy. Fraternal orders do not require subscription of belief to the Deity of Christ and to His atonement for sin, to both of which the Church tenaciously holds. The Church emphasizes Christ as a Saviour and as a Benefactor, because He is a Saviour. Her benevolences are a means to a spiritual end. She works from center to circumference.

The Church proclaims Christ as the life through the quickening spirit of God. The Church declares Christ as the source of salvation. The good that may appear in any other organization is traceable to the principles on which the Church is founded, but the Church has a loftier and more commendable purpose. Other organizations do not go beyond sustentation and reformation. The Church stands for the fundamental truth: Regeneration.

To quote from Dr. J. F. Carson, of Brooklyn: "That which is worth while is the souls of men. The salvation of the humblest child in the Sabbath school is of more value to the scheme of things and to the Master of them than all the associations and societies which claim our time and energy. All the energies of the Church must be focused upon spiritual results. These are the only results that warrant us in summoning to our evangelism the finer energies of the soul and the more costly expenditures of our resources."

Let us not understand that the Church has no mission to the temporal welfare of men. She has and decidedly. She is to imitate Christ in His alleviation of suffering, in His ministry to the poor, the outcast and the afflicted. She is to "distribute to the necessity of the saints." Her orphanages and hospitals witness to this sphere of her mission. There is no benevolence that Christian men can do in the name of fraternal organizations that cannot be done in the name of Christ and the Church and to His glory should our deeds of charity be dedicated.

The Church as an institution has no equal in the opportunities she offers for man's intellectual, social and spiritual gratification.

The sublime truths for which she stands challenge the greatest intellects. No one can have a liberal education who is not familiar with "The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

The social life of the Church is no insignificant feature.

The standard of the Christian that opposes the standard of Christ does not deserve to be countenanced, much less supported by the Christian. There is no creature so low who does not exact our personal and helpful sympathy, and

the Christian spirit shines forth most brilliantly in its condescension to "men of low estate."

Here we are to be guided largely by spiritual considerations. We are to see in every one a possible child of God; and in an effort to reach the lost, the question of congeniality is to play no part.

The Church emphasizes as does no other organization the magnificent possibilities of the individual. The Church is authorized in the declaration that those who accept Christ as a Saviour and follow Him as an example shall some day be "Like Him, for they shall see Him as He is."

The Church enforces the standard of Christ as the regnant incentive in the home, making the Christian home a miniature of heaven, typical of the home beyond, encouraging therein an altar erected to God from which the daily incense of prayer shall ascend, and where converse may be habitual between the soul and the skies.

From the foregoing we are consistently driven to the consideration—

II. *That the Church is supremely worthy of the most loyal support.*

She challenges by virtue of the benefits she bestows, the sympathy, confidence, reverence and support of every member of the community, whether they be in or out of active connection with any Church, regardless of race, condition or position. It ought to go without saying, that the world owes more to the influence of the Church than to all other organizations and influences combined.

The Church may not measure up to her God-ordained responsibilities and privileges, but I challenge any one to produce any substantial evidence that she has not done, and is not doing, infinitely more, directly or indirectly, both

temporally and spiritually, for the real and permanent benefit of humanity than any other influence the world has ever known. Even men who deny that their lives are in any measure influenced by the Church owe very largely the good qualities they exhibit to the very organization they so ungenerously criticize.

It is indisputable that the nations where Christianity has a hearing have the highest order of civilization and are the most desirable for permanent residence, attested by persons who measure life freely from the standpoint of human achievement and earthly glory.

Suppose we had no churches. Suppose none of our people ever assembled for worship, our commercial advantages and material progress would not be sufficiently commanding to make our country an inviting place for residence on the part of those who claim no affiliation with spiritual realities. To tear down our churches would be to swiftly and surely inaugurate a startling exodus.

The Churches may not be doing all they ought to do, but let us not fail to recognize what they are doing. Their presence and influence make our children safer as they walk the streets. They give a measure of security to our dwellings, where, in the darkness of the night, our loved ones are sleeping. They protest with efficiency against the torch of the incendiary, the tool of the burglar, and the bullet of the assassin. There is no man who does not owe more than he can ever pay to the Church for the contribution she makes to his earthly comfort.

The Church's benedictions, like the generous rain from heaven, fall on the just and the unjust. Her ministers stand ready to give their services, which sometimes are needed in the day of adversity, the hour of sorrow, and the darkness of bereavement. From the standpoint of gratitude, of

value received, every man, woman and child owes loyal support to the Church, which can be expressed by attendance upon her services, co-operation with her work, and contributions to her enterprises. Courtesy and gratitude demand attendance on the services of the sanctuary, to say nothing of the higher motives which should constrain men to give ear to the Gospel and to worship God according to His appointment. No man who does not share his gifts with the Church has discharged his duties as a citizen, much less as a Christian.

Christ's Kingdom is not of this world, but the world furnishes the men, women and children who constitute the Kingdom, and that Kingdom is the greatest factor of benefit to the world.

This brings us to the final thought.

III. *The Church pays the handsomest dividends of any other institution.*

Every sincere member is a safe stockholder. Christ knows him by name. His own place is forever secure. When he dies he is only promoted to a higher sphere of service, where he is given "The white stone and the new name"—God's recognition of his individuality.

The principles of the Church admit no class distinctions. Rewards are not contingent on talent, power or position. The infallible test is fidelity to her living Lord.

The Church is a Hall of Fame where all of her suffering heroes are perpetuated. Her humblest members outshine the world's greatest hero. The name of Jerry McAuly, the transformed thief, will be known and proclaimed in heaven, when Cæsar and Alexander and Napoleon are as dead men out of mind. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John history records an honorable place, while Herod, Pilate, Festus and Agrippa are held in ignominy and only serve as

the dark background to the exquisite portraits of these who were not born to die.

Then there is peace of conscience, because the one question that clamors for settlement in every human bosom has been settled.

The Holy Spirit is freely given to qualify, to comfort and to guide.

Eternal fellowship and glory with the choicest spirits of earth and heaven — Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Elijah and David. The Disciples and Paul, Luther, Calvin and Knox, Wesley, Whitfield and Spurgeon, Lee, Jackson and Gordon, the elect of God from every nation, kindred and tongue, and Jesus Christ, the crown jewel of the ages.

What folly, what failure, what destiny accrue to those who seek to lay waste the Church! What a magnificent institution do we today behold! Started in the family of Abraham, and through him, according to promise, all the nations of the earth have been blessed. How she has spread until her banner waves over almost every land under the sun.

"Walk about Zion and go around about her; tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following, for this God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death."

One is disposed to become a little facetious when modern prophets criticize the Church and proclaim that she has been a failure, and that the world has outgrown her teachings. Compare any of the modern makeshifts with the Church, which has furnished the missionaries of the Cross, who have blazed the path of civilization, and who, under hardships indescribable and privations manifold, have given the Gospel with scarcely sufficient remuneration to keep

body and soul together. Who are nearer the teachings of the Master, those who are "clothed in fine linen and fare sumptuously," or those who, like Paul, have their "lives in jeopardy every hour"? The old Church, with her simple and sublime principles, has furnished the self-sacrificing spirits commended of her Lord.

How can any man withhold his admiration and support from such an institution?

Men are just as inexcusable when they turn their backs upon the mother who bore them as they are when they reject the Christ who redeemed them and give the weight of their influence against the Church, which is the fair and adorable "Bride of the Lamb."

The Church endured in spite of the opposition of Saul of Tarsus, and she will endure notwithstanding the efforts of men of today to thwart her influence and progress.

Remember, my hearers, that by your failure to identify yourself positively with the Church, you are in league with the enemies of God against the only institution that has the absolute sanction of high heaven.

Brethren of the Church, disciples of Christ, let us magnify this glorious organization. Let us accord her such unstinted support and such soulful loyalty as to impress all men that we regard the Church above all other institutions and supremely worthy of our pre-eminent concern. Let us neglect her services for nothing. Let us prove that in our affections she stands singular and alone; that she needs not to be supplemented, much less will she ever be supplanted by any other organization.

Whatever may be our obligations to other societies and associations, let us assume no attachments that will interfere with our service to the Church or cause us to subordinate her sacred interests. O, that men and women dis-

played the same energy and enthusiasm in the work of the Church that they do in business and social life!

There may not be the glitter and glamour about this work, but it will abide and serve us well when the day of wreck and reckoning has come.

Let us give to this Heaven-ordained institution such time, such prayers, such consecration as are in keeping with her lofty purposes.

This is a day when other demands may interfere with the unhindered service the Church reasonably requires. We have societies without number, good, bad and indifferent. Modern society is a veritable network of organizations.

The Church is sufficient to meet the spirtiual need of the world. There will always be opposition to her mission. Her Author was antagonized. But this opposition measures those who oppose and not the institution which is the object of their opposition.

Some day, purged of all imperfections, the Church will be adorned as a bride for her husband, and we will sit down to that Eternal Banquet—"The marriage supper of the Lamb and the Bride of the Lamb." "When all the fierce warfare of earth shall have been accomplished and the Kingdom of Christ assured, the phalanxes of His Church shall go up to the city with songs and tokens of victory. They shall march together and shall lay their trophies at the feet of Him upon whose head are many crowns—King of Kings and Lord of Lords!"

The Church militant is to be the Church triumphant.

"On the far reef the breakers
Recoil in shattered foam,
But still the sea behind them
Urges its forces home.
Its shout of triumph surges
Through all the thundrous din—
The *wave* may be defeated,
But the *tide* is sure to win.

"But the reef is rough and cruel
Upon its jagged wall;
One wave, a score, a hundred,
Broken and beaten, fall;
But in defeat they conquer,
The sea comes flooding in;
Wave upon wave is *routed*,
And the *tide* is sure to win.

"O mighty sea, thy message
In clanging spray is cast—
Within *God's* plan of progress
It matters not at last
How wide the shores of evil,
How strong the reefs of sin,
The *wave* may be defeated,
But the *Tide* is sure to win."

V

The ETERNAL PAST

"God requireth that which is past."—ECCLESIASTES 3:15.

WE are coming to the end of the year. It is naturally a time for serious thought. Let us make some impressive observations concerning the past.

The past is *real*. On your way to church this morning you passed over considerable ground and left behind you numerous buildings. Every foot of the way is there yet and the structures have not disappeared.

The past is *unchangeable*. Every thought, every word, every deed. We can no more alter what we have put into it than a man can withdraw his tones and words recorded by the phonograph. "What I have written I have written." The past is beyond our reach.

The past is *ours*. The old year is gone. No. Where is it? In your heart; in my heart. The past is just as really ours as the present garment we wear holds within its warp and woof the material of which it was made while it was being manufactured. The past is just as inseparably associated with us as the houses in which we live are associated with the trees of the forest from which the material composing them was obtained.

All of life is in a true sense one. Human life is a chain. Each link is a year. Each period is tied to what has gone before and to what is to come after. I stand at the center of the Brooklyn bridge. That center is the present. The part behind me is the past. The part before me is the future. The portion over which I have passed is yesterday. Where I stand is today. The portion before me is forever.

We are literally the product of the past, and what we are today foreshadows what we will be tomorrow. "The child is father to the man." "That which hath been is now, and God requireth that which is past."

Generation after generation exhibits similar characteristics. Men of today find a faithful portrayal of their own lives and experiences in the scriptural history of Biblical characters. Human nature remains the same. Conditions may vary, but men of today are influenced by the same motives and impelled to the same actions as they have been in all the ages of the past. "There is nothing new under the sun." "Blood is thicker than water." Racial peculiarities are as marked now as ever.

I doubt not that some of us present a strikingly similar appearance to our own great-great-great-grandparents. If they could be raised from the dead and respond in the mirror into which we look, we would not know but that our own likeness was being reflected.

Then, too, we doubtless have a similar temperament to those ancient ancestors. Our environments may be different, but that which constitutes personality is virtually the same. In this we have a sublime and irresistible argument for the inspiration of the Bible. It is just as discerning of our lives as of all other lives in the past. Its precepts and examples are up to date—just as relevant and just as potent as ever.

Our knowledge and skill come out of the past. The inventive genius of today has had all of the models of the past to guide him, and some one in the future will have his work as an additional incentive to the improvement of the same invention. Those who were permitted to go to St. Louis stood in wonder before the grandeur of that marvelous Exposition. It disclosed the cumulative wisdom

and energy of the past. We boast of the present. Where did it come from? It is the product of the past.

Our civilization has come from that source. Men who contended and died for principles centuries ago have assured the heritage we today enjoy. The grain of wheat has fallen into the ground and died, and we are the harvest.

I have no sympathy whatever with the flings of modern pygmies at the giants of the past. The past is our mother and we are her children. What base ingratitude for a child to try to forget the mother, or to cast dishonor upon her name and deeds! Today's habits and moods and character have come from yesterday.

The past is ours. In a true sense, man is his own recording angel. He can make the record, but he can neither change nor blot it out. What we have thought and felt and done is embedded in the very fiber of our being—registered in the nerves and muscles and tissues of the body, imprinted upon the memory and stamped upon the soul. This stupendous fact is not due to the mere fiat of God. It is so because of our nature, our composition, our constitution. It is so because it is so. It is insistent. It is inevitable.

The past is *eternal*. "That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been." The earth is round. Two persons starting from the same point in opposite directions will come together again. So a man starts out here toward eternity. When he gets there he will confront the point at which he started and recall all that lies between.

Persons rescued from drowning bear testimony to the remarkable fact that in a few moments the past of their lives has come before them. In a dream we traverse years in a moment. So when we stand before the judgment bar the vivid past will assert its present reality.

We are immortal here and now. Time is the beginning of eternity. We are already in the eternal world.

"God requireth that which is past." This suggests

I. BLESSINGS RECOUNTED

Every hour has been graciously burdened with God's favors. As the Psalmist says, "They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee. If I would declare and speak of them they are more than can be numbered." The closing year suggests to us the closing of many lives dear to us in the past. Parents, children, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, friends. We should thank God that He permitted them to live. The remembrance of their sojourn with us has fallen during all of these years as a benediction on our pilgrim pathway toward the New Jerusalem, which for so long they have enjoyed.

"Though dead they speak in reason's ear,
And in example live,
Their faith and hope and mighty deeds
Still fresh instruction give."

"A dear little girl had been taught to pray specially for her father. He had been suddenly taken away. Kneeling at her evening devotion, her voice faltered; and as her eyes met her mother's, she sobbed, 'O, mother, I cannot leave him out. Let me say, thank God I had a dear father once, so I can keep him in my prayers.' "

"God requireth that which is past." This suggests

II. OPPORTUNITIES OF USEFULNESS

What use have we made of our talents? Every hour we have lived has been an added responsibility. We have

had all the time there was, and each moment of it has been freighted with eternal import. Our neglects are ours with all of their attendant consequences. Everything "in His name" we have done will rise up and call us blessed in the day of final reckoning.

"God requireth that which is past." This further suggests

III. INCREASED DILIGENCE

I believe in New Year's resolutions. The man who does, is the man who has resolved to do. All desire to do, and to be better, but it requires resolution to execute the desire. The Prodigal desired to return to his father, but this alone was not sufficient. He got home because he resolved to execute his desire, because he said: "I *will* arise and go to my father." "It is better not to vow than to vow and not pay," but it is best to both vow and pay. The will is the lever that the devil seeks to grasp. He knows he can't prevent the desire, nor does he care to do so. He knows the crisis is in the will, and at this point he sits and suggests. I doubt not that every unconverted person who has been under the preaching of the word from this sacred desk, has more than once desired to be a Christian. The trouble is you have failed to resolve. Satan has defeated you at this crucial point. Don't allow him another victory, because each one he gains makes him bolder and stronger, and renders you less courageous and weaker. Many Christians have doubtless desired to be more spiritual and more consistent in the performance of their duties. Have you resolved to do so? There is consolation that you may rise on stepping stones of your past failures to higher things. God never countenances nor encourages sin and failure, but so great is His mercy that He can make a past failure an essen-

tial and glorious element in future success. Paul's character is emphasized because he was once Saul of Tarsus. He could not have been what he became, if he hadn't been what he was.

So I say to all whose past lives have been marred by sins, either of omission or commission, whether you are a Christian or not—not only need you not despair, you need not sit and grieve over the past. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Let past failures be the incentive to a life made conspicuous in usefulness by its contrast with yesterday's mistakes.

Let me outline a set of suggestive resolutions:

1. Resolve to be a Christian—unless you do, you will never be one.
2. Resolve to make the spiritual preëminent.
3. Resolve to use the means for this purpose.
4. Resolve to associate with persons of noble ideals.
5. Resolve to give God the benefit of every doubt.
6. Resolve to attend all of the services of the sanctuary.
7. Resolve to actively engage in Christian work.
8. Resolve to "pray without ceasing."
9. Resolve to establish a family altar, or to maintain the one you have.
10. Resolve to study the Bible.
11. Resolve to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."
12. Resolve to so live that when the end comes it will be to "depart and be with Christ."

One other thought. It is momentous.

"God requireth that which is past."

We have seen that the Past is real, that it is unchangeable, that it is ours, and that it will meet us in eternity. This is

true of saint and sinner. What are we to do about it? "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." This is unavoidable. It is inevitable. It is the will of Him who made us, and whose Son died to redeem us. It is the decree of the Infinite and Omnipotent God. We will all be there to give an account of the "deeds done in the body." *That* will be the present. The *"deeds done"* will be the past. The verdict rendered will be executed in the future. That which hath been will be before us then. "That which is to be hath already been." Abraham simply said to Dives, who was enduring his sentence: "Son, remember." It was his past that determined his future. This couplet will be true in eternity,

> "Of all the sad words of tongue or pen,
> The saddest are these, It might have been."

"God requireth that which is past."

IV. How Shall We Meet

that tremendous, inevitable, eternal requirement?

In one of two possible ways. In my own strength, or in the strength of another; or, rather, in my own weakness, or in another's strength. I must either stand for myself, or some one else must stand for me. "God requireth that which is past." Do you say I am a better man than I was yesterday? Maybe so. Do you say I will be a better man tomorrow than I am today? Maybe so. What about yesterday? The past is real and unchangeable. It is yours and it is eternal. Reformation can't accomplish your salvation. The man who has dissipated has now in his body the effects of it. The man who has sinned has the effects of sin in his character.

Impossible for the sinner to work out a salvation for himself. This is true for a number of reasons. If it were not true, God would not have given His Son as a Saviour. We wouldn't have needed him. His sojourn and suffering here would have been useless, a cruel and palpable absurdity.

But it is entirely impossible for the sinner to work out a salvation for himself for the reason that the insuperable difficulty lies behind him. The Past is his and beyond his reach. The guilt of past sins, of past unbelief, of past failures, are his. It is written. He can't get over it, he can't get under it, he can't blot it out. The law requires obedience for the past, as well as for the present and future. It involves the whole of life. Every violation of that law is charged against the sinner. Those acts are beyond his reach and irrevocably fixed. There is no hope in this direction. You say then, I am undone. I answer, yes. I answer, no. Can that Past be reached? Yes, in one way—satisfactory to God, satisfactory to the sinner. The Past can be reached by substitution.

The past life of the sinner is blotted out by substituting the life, obedience, merits and death of the Saviour for his own. Glorious truth! The very heart of the Gospel. The supreme expression of divine love; the summit of infinite wisdom. The measureless and ultimate exhibition of God's infinite resources. This is the point where mercy and truth meet together and where righteousness and peace kiss each other. This is the agreement of God's justice and mercy, to which the soul of man responds, Amen! Thank God, I have this truth to proclaim. The Past is not destroyed by simply going over it, any more than the ocean is destroyed by the vessel that crosses it and leaves its unfathomable depths behind. The past being ours, out of our reach, and for which God will call us into account, then the only method

of reaching it is by substitution. The penalty of violated law had to be met. Either the sinner must meet it, or his substitute must do so. Both can't be spared. Jesus Christ met the alternative, satisfied the law, and died that we might live.

Some of you merchants have accounts still standing. They were made with you in the past. They have not been paid, they are on your books, item by item. There is one of two ways to settle them. Either your debtors must pay them, or you, as the creditor, must cancel them. The sinner is unable to pay his indebtedness, and if the creditor should refuse to cancel them, he is undone.

But God is a gracious creditor. He offers to pay your debts. Suppose the merchant creditor should offer to cancel the account, and the debtor refuses. The debtor says: I know I can't settle them myself, but I will not allow my creditor to do so. He refuses the receipt; the debts are unpaid, the burden remains, the conscience sits in judgment and will not be appeased. Whose fault? The debtor's. He has refused the cancellation, declined the forgiveness, spurned the pardon.

Jesus Christ offers to cancel our debts, to blot out our past. "If the life gone over be destroyed, then death will cancel all obligations. The past will be behind us." "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare *his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past,* through the forbearance of God."

The Old Testament worthies, centuries before Christ, experienced the benefits of this redemption. "The Lamb

was slain from the foundation of the world." It is said of Abraham, "And he believed in the Lord and he counted it to him for righteousness." He realized by anticipation.

"God requireth that which is past." Christ completely meets that requirement for those who believe in Him and accept Him as a Saviour. Will you take Him in this solemn hour? Then the eternal years of God are yours.

His life, our example; His death, our atonement; His surety, our reconciliation and salvation; His perfect righteousness, our judgment, and His radiant glory, our eternal reward.

VI

The SUPREME QUESTION *and* ANSWER

"What must I do to be saved?"
—Acts 16:30.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."
—Acts 16:31.

The Apostle Paul believed in special providence. God, to him, was a real and controlling personality. Stricken speechless by the voice from heaven on his way to Damascus, ever afterwards he was on the alert, and in commendable readiness to hear and to heed what the Lord would speak.

The urgency and privilege of duty found a cordial response in the great apostle's heart, whereupon he was never disobedient to the heavenly vision. He and his companion, Silas, are making rapid and permanent impress on the peoples with whom they meet on this Missionary journey. The spirit guides them from one country to another. While at Troas a vision appears to Paul in the night. "There stood a man of Macedonia and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us."

In answer to this appeal, we find him in a short time at Philippi, a chief city of Macedonia. On the Sabbath the woman Lydia is converted, and gives loyal encouragement to her benefactors.

Paul exorcises the spirit of divination from the damsel, who brought, by soothsaying, much gain to her masters. Angered that the "hope of their gains was gone" these masters enrage the rulers and the people against Paul and Silas, have them cast into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely, "who having received such a charge, thrust

them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks." Soon it is midnight to the prisoners, but noon-day splendor in the souls of these faithful witnesses, for at this hour they are praying and singing praises unto God. Suddenly there is a great earthquake, doors are opened, bonds are loosed, the keeper awakes. The supposed condition of affairs drives him to the verge of suicide. The voice of Paul allays his fears as he exclaims: "Do thyself no harm, we are all here." The incident impresses the jailer with the power of God. The situation is changed in a moment, Paul and Silas are the keepers, and the jailer is a helpless prisoner at the mercy of Him, for whose cause they had been so ruthlessly incarcerated. The keeper calls for a light, springs in, falls down, trembling before Paul and Silas, brings them out and says, "What must I do to be saved?" O, is there another moment in human life so fraught with significance as that moment when an aroused soul asks with all the seriousness incident to eternal exigencies, "What must I do to be saved?"

The art of asking questions is one of the finest of fine arts. Take the teacher asking questions of the student. With what skill he seeks to discover the knowledge requisite to the student's demands. Observe the physician asking questions of the patient, earnestly seeking an accurate diagnosis of the case for his own guidance and for the welfare of the patient. Behold the lawyer asking questions of the witness, endeavoring to ascertain the facts upon which the acquittal or the condemnation of the accused is to be founded. Such questions are important. They disclose information necessary to the welfare of individuals and to the peace and prosperity of communities. However, the question asked by this Philippian jailer is the greatest of all questions.

No question in political or commercial life is comparable with it. It was direct: no philosopher or theologian could have asked it more concisely. Not, "what must I do to accumulate wealth, or to attain unto eminence," but "what must I do to be to be *saved?*"

Mark the personal element. Not what must these prisoners do, nor my neighbors, nor my kinspeople, but "what must *I* do to be saved?"

Mark the glowing intensity, the agony of an aroused conscience. "What must *I* do to be *saved?*"

The art of answering questions is also one to be cultivated. The apostle knew his business. He had zeal with knowledge.

He was in the constant and splendid realization of that calm equipoise of soul, that under the most perplexing situations, forbade the evidences of excitement, or the exhibition of discomfiture. So his answer is direct, accurate, intense, comprehensive. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

Having then a question and an answer, let us treat the text by asking and answering.

I. WHAT IS SALVATION?

It is not simply reformation or confirmation. It is even more than regeneration. It consists in three things, a change of state, a change of character, a change of destiny, or Pardon, Peace and Paradise.

It involves the conceptions of Justification, Sanctification and Glorification. The requirements of the term are fully met in the soul's realization of what is involved in the expression used by Paul in Romans: "Conformed to the image of His son." But let us deal with these specific features of Salvation.

1. A change of state, or pardon, or justification. The keeper of the prison recognized that something in his life was radically wrong. Pressing upon his soul was the weight of condemnation.

The thief on the cross gives expression to this thought when he upbraids his companion. "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation, and we indeed justly?"

It is clear that every unsaved person is in a state of condemnation, under the penalty of sin, as the thief utters it. "For we receive the due reward of our deeds." In some way the penalty of outraged law must be met, and the majesty of God's infinite Justice must be vindicated. As an authority has said: "The law is like its author, absolutely unchangeable and can be satisfied by nothing else than an absolutely perfect righteousness at once fulfilling the precept and suffering the penalty. This was rendered by Christ as our representative and his perfect righteousness as imputed to us is the sole and strictly legal ground of our justification." "Thus He is made for us the end of the law for righteousness and we are made the righteousness of God in Him." We are "justified freely by His (God's) grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The penalty of sin and for sin is paid by Christ in the sinner's stead, as his substitute. Therefore, in this way, "God is both just and the justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus."

The unsaved state is one of condemnation, the saved state is one of justification. The unsaved man is condemned for his sins. The saved man is justified because Christ has met the penalty due him for his sin.

A criminal in jail needs release above all things. He must have this first. A legacy for him would be of no use. It's

done in an instant, not by inches, but at once and once for all.

Wherefore "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone."

"A man was once being tried for a crime, the punishment of which was death, the witnesses came in one by one and testified to his guilt, but there he stood quite calm and unmoved. The Judge and the Jury were quite surprised at his indifference, they could not understand how he could take such a serious matter so calmly. When the jury retired, it did not take them many minutes to decide on the verdict. 'Guilty,' and when the Judge was passing the sentence of death upon the criminal, he told him how surprised he was that he could be so unmoved at the prospect of death. When the judge had finished, the man put his hand in his bosom, pulled out a document and walked out of the dock a free man. Ah, that was how he could be so calm. It was a free pardon from his King, which he had in his pocket all the time. The King had instructed him to allow the trial to proceed, and to produce the pardon only when he was condemned. Now that is just what will make the saved joyful in the great day of judgment; we have a pardon from the King, and it is sealed with the blood of His son. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "Having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."

2. Salvation also includes a change of character, or Peace, or Sanctification. The heart is the center of spiritual life. Its Scriptural meaning is varied and comprehensive.

The activities of the will, the conscience, and the affections are all included in its meaning. In the sinner there is an evil heart of unbelief. Unbelief is the root-sin. It is the sin which doth so easily beset us all. God's address to the individual is, "my son, give me thine heart." His claim is pre-eminent. The conscience is aroused, the will surrenders and the heart responds. The result is Peace. The work of sanctification is begun, the foundation of character is laid, the superstructure of a beautiful and endless life begins to rise, and the good work is carried on to divine perfection.

God demands the heart, because the heart is man's response to the enjoyment of eternal realities. This change of heart is a change from distrust to trust, from hate to love, from disobedience to obedience, from impurity to purity, from discord to harmony, from apathy to zeal. Henceforth the issues of life are from a pure heart. Thoughts, words, and deeds all witness to the reality of the great change. The mind moves and contemplates in the spiritual. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." God's will is done, and human energy is expended for His glory.

An accompaniment of this change of character is peace. Peace because the man is consciously saved "from the guilt of past transgressions."

"He has obtained remission of sins; they are blotted out as a cloud." Peace, because he is no longer in bondage to sin. He has changed his employers. He has parted company with his erstwhile merciless and exacting master. His chains are broken. The prison doors have opened, he walks out into the sweet liberty of the sons of God. "The strong man has been bound and cast out, the vassalage of the devil has been destroyed. Peace, because he has been relieved of the polluting influences of sin on the heart. Sin no longer reigns

in his being. He has a clean heart and a right spirit. Peace, because the tormenting fears of sin upon the conscience have been removed. No fear of the wrath to come. Hope and happiness instead of anxiety and restlessness. Conscience void of offense toward man and God. Enrapturing state: Peace with God and joy in the Holy Ghost."

"Peace, because freed from the effects of sin in the world to come. For him no gloomy resurrection, no public and humiliating exposure, no dread sentence at the judgment day, no endless separation from God." "I have spilled the ink over a bill and so have blotted it till it can hardly be read: but this is quite another thing from having the debt blotted out, for that cannot be until payment is made. So a man may blot his sins from his memory and quiet his mind with false hopes, but the peace which this will bring him is widely different from that which arises from God's forgiveness of sin through the satisfaction which Jesus made in His atonement. Our blotting is one thing: God's blotting out is something far higher." "Justification is in order to sanctification." A prisoner may be dismissed from the bar, acquitted of the charges, or he may be convicted, but pardoned; but he may go with all of the principles of wickedness as strong as ever within him. His condition is changed but not his character. But it is never so in God's dealings with men. In every case where there is justification, sanctification accompanies it." Salvation includes sanctification through the truth. Sanctification is a work, but it is steady and sure. "Sanctification is a work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness." This element in salvation is of essential importance and immeasurable satisfaction. It evinces the transforming power of the truth. It witnesses

the perfection of Christ's righteousness. It makes heavenly glories possible of discernment and enjoyment. Its resultant is strong, convincing and impregnable Christian character.

3. Salvation also includes a change of destiny.

Evidently those who are saved were once lost.

The Philippian jailer, doubtless, recognized his lost condition. The lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son present to us the seeking and finding love of God. What is a lost condition?

The sheep was separated from the shepherd's protection, severed from companionship with the members of the flock, smitten with the awful sense of loneliness, and exposed to the actual suffering of which it was capable. The Prodigal Son was in "a far country," reduced to want, driven to the most menial service under an uncongenial master, without a friend to alleviate his self-imposed sufferings. These be true pictures of the lost soul's condition. The destiny of the one cannot be the destiny of the other. The one is lost and the other is saved. The destiny of the lost is one thing —the destiny of the saved is another. Salvation then necessarily and inevitably involves a change of destiny, a change from death to life, from poverty to plenty, from sorrow to joy, from condemnation to pardon, from separation to reunion, from woe to weal, from loneliness to companionship, from destruction to salvation.

The destiny of the saved soul is entrance into the enjoyment of all the blessings of adoption.

"The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory." "In His presence where there is fulness of joy and at His right hand, where there are pleasures forevermore."

"That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never, forsake."

"An inheritor of all things." Beatific and never-ending companionship with the saints in brighter skies, green fields and more abundant harvests. "Kings and Priests unto God." Marching to the music of the spheres, keeping time with the hosts of God, the radiant legions of ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto the heirs of salvation. A voice in the General Assembly of the First-born, songs on the lips and harps in the hands. There is, there can be but one destiny in the universe for a saved soul—the Bosom of the everlasting God.

Having sought to answer in some measure the question, what is salvation, a second important interrogation demands our attention.

II. WHERE IS SALVATION TO BE FOUND?

The text answers. "The Lord Jesus Christ."

The faith that saves is faith in a person.

This passage gives us the wonderful constitution of His personality by the full use of His name. "The Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus indicates that He is the Saviour. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." The name includes His offices and work. As such He possesses saving merit and power. He is adapted to the sinner's state and danger. An all sufficient Saviour, an accessible Saviour, an everlasting Saviour, a Saviour "unto the uttermost," the only Saviour "none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved."

"Jesus Christ"—the anointed Saviour appointed and sent forth for this specific purpose—under the anointing power and fulness of the Holy Ghost." Hence He is designated "The Lord's Christ." "The Lord Jesus Christ,"—"the divine anointed Saviour, Jesus is both Lord and Christ."

"As Lord He is possessed of all the titles and perfections and glories of the Father. Boundless majesty and glory are His. His prerogative is the exercise of universal authority and dominion. Things in earth, in heaven and under the earth are all subject to Him. We see then that the object of faith, "The Lord Jesus Christ" possesses every attribute necessary to inspire confidence and hope and produce joy and peace through believing on Him." As Lord, He is able to save, as Jesus He is willing to save, as Christ He is designed to save.

Throughout the scriptures the personality of Christ is stressed. When the lame man is healed, the application of the sermon is, "God having raised up His son Jesus sent Him to bless you." Philip's message to the Eunuch. "He preached unto Him Jesus." To Aeneas, Peter said, "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." To Saul of Tarsus the person Jesus appeared and spoke. Paul declared to the Athenians that God would judge the world by one man whom He had appointed. Salvation is not found in societies, nor in organizations, nor in creeds, nor in any human invention, but in the Lord Jesus Christ. Even Christ's finished work is not to be "conceived as distinct from a living person with a present power." A salvation that was a mental apprehension of a form of truth could not suit everybody, so Christ's own way of salvation is this. "He that hath the son of God hath life." The apostles way: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The term religion is much abused. Not religion, but Christ is our need.

I have heard somewhere of the man who said in substance, he had tried *"it"* (meaning religion), he was persuaded to try Him (Christ) and was saved and satisfied, "Christ and Him crucified." A Divine Human being. Both conceptions are essential and both must be tenaciously held. "If Christ be not God, then to worship Him is idolatry and the Father has deluded and deceived the world."

"O, Lord Jesus, my heart cries out from its depth that Thou art very God. In Thee I find rest and satisfaction." It is said "A father once said to his son, 'God has said that only the pure in heart shall see Him. How then can my little boy expect to go to heaven?' The dear little fellow's face grew very sad. His heart seemed full, and bursting into tears, he laid his head in his father's bosom and sobbed out, 'Papa, Jesus can save me.' Yes, salvation is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ."

III. How Is Salvation Obtained?

"Believe," O, for an inspiration to disclose clearly the nature of saving faith!

1. "There must be testimony. This we find in the Gospel. Herein is revealed all that relates to man's salvation. A mass of evidence, external and internal, clear, full and sufficient."

2. Knowledge. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Presumption may be based on ignorance. Faith is grounded in intelligence.

3. "To believe means to have a firm persuasion of the truth of the testimony; conviction and reception of the gracious message of God."

4. The gist of faith, however, is found in confidence,

reliance and trust. To "believe" is not simply believing about Christ. The Philippian jailer, probably had this kind of faith previous to his memorable experience. You may believe there is a God, accept the credibility of the Bible, mentally assent to the claims of the Saviour. This is not sufficient, "Devils believe and tremble." I will suppose three men, one of them is a physician, the other two are sick. One says, "I believe this man is a physician; I believe he is a competent physician; I believe he has been eminently successful in his practice, beneficial, doubtless, to numerous sufferers." But he does not put his case into the physician's hands. He makes no practical and personal use of his professed faith. He stops infinitely short of the essential element in faith.

The other sick man utters a hearty amen to the expressed belief of his companion, and in addition proves his faith by putting his case in the physician's hands. He allows him to prescribe for him. He says, "I will take prussic acid, belladonna, strychnine—anything you suggest. Here it is, confidence, reliance, trust. This is saving faith. Precisely this the jailer did. Precisely this every saved man and woman has done. Precisely this you must do, if you ever experience the joys of a pardoned soul. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to put my case in His hands. To believe on Christ is to give the individual "assent of mind and consent of heart" to His Divine claims. The testimony offered, the soul must personally accept. You must confide in the rich and blessed declaration of the text, you must rely on the unquestionable veracity of Christ; you must trust for the full, deep and grand realization of all the promised blessings. It is the appropriating power in faith that calls for our attention. To really believe is to personally receive. "Faith in Jesus Christ is

a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel."

Feeling and understanding are not necessary. One of the very best illustrations of this important truth was given under my personal observation by the sainted Moody in an after-meeting. Standing before the large number of inquirers, addressing himself directly for effectiveness to some boys immediately in front of him, he said: "Boys, I have something in my hand. Do you believe this? Yes. I have a dollar in my hand. Do you believe this? Yes. Well, do you see it? No. Do you feel it? No. Why, then, do you believe it? Because you say so." "Exactly," said the great evangelist. He pointed to one of the boys and said, "Young man, if you will come up here I will give you this dollar. Do you believe it?" The boy hesitated, finally declined to go. Mr. Moody addressed another boy sitting near. "Young man, if you will come I will give you this dollar. Do you believe it?" The little fellow stepped out on his faith and received the money. The illustration was applied. The something in Mr. Moody's hand represented what God offers to man. The dollar represented the specific thing offered—Salvation. That it was hidden in the hand illustrated that seeing and feeling are not necessary to believing. The attitude of the two boys was illustrative of the attitude of men toward the truth of salvation. The reception by the one and the rejection by the other marked the difference between a spurious and a genuine faith. The boy who received rejoiced in his possession. The one who rejected, regretted his refusal.

Christ is offered to you. To believe on Him as He requires, you must receive Him. Your faith must have the appropriating power.

IV. How May I Know I Am Saved?

An important question. What will enable me to say, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine"?

Evidences of salvation are many. I mention three:

1. A growing sense of unworthiness. Look out for those persons who boastingly confess sinlessness. Peter said, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

Paul's growth in grace marked thus; when a young Christian he said, "I am the least of the apostles." Further on, "Less than the least of all the saints." Old in service and ripe for glory. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Dr. Meyer says, "When a man's face really shines, like Moses, he wists it not."

2. Yearning desire to please God. Mind on spiritual things. A sense of the imperativeness and grandeur of duty. Joyful and persistent acquiescence in the pleasure of the Psalmist, "I delight to do thy will, O my God."

3. Trust in the word of Christ. I may know I am saved because Jesus says so. The centurion's servant was healed at a distance. He believed the word spoken by Christ.

No uncertainty about this salvation. "I give unto them eternal life." "Thy sins are forgiven thee." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou *shalt* be saved."

The logic is irresistible. Major premise: "The Lord Jesus Christ." Minor premise: "Believe." Conclusion: "Saved." Your faith in the beginning a thread. As you follow on to know the Lord it becomes a cable.

V. WHEN TO BELIEVE

"Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation." In a sermon to young men, delivered at the request of the Philadelphia Institute, Dr. Beddell said, "I have now been nearly twenty years in the ministry of the Gospel, and I here publicly state to you that I do not believe I could enumerate three persons over fifty years of age whom I have heard ask the solemn and eternally momentous question, 'What must I do to be saved?' "

Believer, your comfort, "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Unbeliever, you need Christ. "Climbing plants never seem to grow rapidly until they have laid hold of something to cling to; then you may see them shoot upwards. So with these hearts of ours. They will make but little progress heavenward until they have laid hold of Christ."

"Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

VII

The GREAT TEACHER

"All the people were very attentive to hear Him."—LUKE 19:48.

JESUS CHRIST as a teacher of spiritual truth occupies in the world's history the place of pre-eminence. Nicodemus said to Him: "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." Jesus said unto Pilate, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth." Then Pilate propounds to Him one of the most searching questions on record: "What is Truth?" A little later Pilate virtually answers his own question when he releases Jesus to the Jews. As Jesus comes forth wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, Pilate saith unto them: "Behold the man!" What is Truth? Answer—"Behold the man." Jesus said, "I am the Truth." "Never man spake like this man." The teaching of Jesus demands our attention. It will be profitable to note, some:

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS TEACHING

1. *He was sincere.* There was no deception about Him. He was what He claimed to be. He knew what was in man, and He knew Himself. And He came to reveal God. This is what He did. His faultless sincerity shines out in His whole life. So that the verdict of the world is an unqualified tribute to the exact correspondence between what Christ said He was, and what He demonstrated Himself to be.

2. *He was earnest.* He gave Himself in unstinted measure to His mission. "He went about doing good." The record is—"He taught daily in the Temple." Not only so, His interest in His cause was so profound that the

earnestness of His soul is disclosed in His careful instruction to individuals. Recall His words to the woman at the well, and to Nicodemus. Two discourses to individuals, representing two extreme classes, and both of them set forth the plan of salvation with remarkable clearness, and marvelous completeness.

3. *He was courageous.* He opened His mouth boldly to speak the Truth. He went into the Temple and began to cast out them that sold therein and them that bought, saying unto them, "It is written, 'My House is the House of Prayer.' But ye have made it a den of thieves.' With a courage that has scarcely been rivaled, He said to those who were in control and who claimed a monopoly of virtue: "Woe unto you, Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites!" His whole ministry was an exhibition of the martyr-spirit. Antagonized from the beginning, and relentlessly unto the end, by the ruling classes, with His face steadfastly towards Jerusalem, the place of His known crucifixion, He declared the Truth with impressive sincerity, with flaming earnestness, and with startling boldness.

4. *He was authoritative.* He stood for the Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth. He knew that He had come from God, and that He embodied in His own personality, the eternal Truth. Truth came from Him as naturally, and as inevitably as the light from the Sun. So unique was His teaching that we have the record at the close of His sermon on the Mount, "And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority and not as the Scribes." They doubtless felt that they were getting Truth from the bosom of the Eternal God.

"All the people were very attentive to hear Him." These are the characteristics that ought to mark all who have the

message to deliver. The man today who really gains and holds the attention of the people is the man whose ministry is characterized by Sincerity, Earnestness, Boldness, Authoritativeness. Jesus Christ is the safe Exemplar to follow here, as He is in all spheres of life. With intense and persevering earnestness He instructed His disciples. Their slowness to comprehend Him called forth this expression made to the two Disciples on the way to Emmaus, "O fools and slow of heart to believe, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory." But in spite of their unresponsiveness, "Beginning at Moses and all of the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself."

Having considered some characteristics of Christ's teachings, we note

II. SOME SUBJECTS DISCUSSED BY HIM

We pause to state that the great cry today is—Back to Christ. The emphasis on His teaching is pronounced. Some have gone to extremes on this line. They magnify the Gospels at the expense of the other portions of Scripture. They draw distinctions between what Jesus said, and what Paul said. They insinuate, if they do not positively declare, that Paul was not inspired, and that His writings are not authoritative. They forget the statement—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." We find books which lay emphasis upon the Master's own words, and in some instances, I fear, impliedly discriminate against the other portions of Scripture. This emphasis on the teaching of Christ finds its expression in editions of the New Testament where the actual sayings of Jesus are printed in different type. I am not saying that there may not be some advantage in this. I am seeking to give emphasis to the thought

that there are those who rather discourage allegiance to certain doctrines in the Bible propounded by Paul, and who seemingly regard "Systematic Theology" as a menace to pure Christianity. They say—Let us get at the Mind of the Master. Let us see what Christ has to say. Some seem to intimate that the teachings of Jesus set at naught what is commonly known—the hard doctrines of the Bible. They grant that Jesus Christ is authoritative—So do we all. Now let us see what Jesus had to say about important subjects. Let us consider His teaching, in the following particulars:

1. Man's relation to himself.
2. Man's relation to his fellowman.
3. Man's relation to God.

1. *Man's relation to himself.* It was Jesus who said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisses, was outward conformity to certain rules and regulations. Jesus taught righteousness of heart, He went back of the act, and placed the emphasis upon the condition of the heart. It was Jesus who said, "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." Evidently He meant that we are to seek the kind of perfection that inheres in God, though we may not attain to the same degree of perfection. The burden of the teaching of Jesus is that man is a responsible being—that he is to guard his thoughts, his words, his conduct. It was Jesus who said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal." It was Jesus who said, "Take no thought for your life"—"Seek

ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

2. *Man's relation to his fellowman.* It was Jesus who said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It was Jesus who said, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." It was Jesus who said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and persecute you." "For if ye love them that love you what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" It was Jesus who said, "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." It was Jesus who uttered the parable of the Good Samaritan, which stands for all time as a lesson to us to render assistance to the unfortunate, and to do so without any discrimination because of nationality, race or condition. "Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves." And he said, "He that showed mercy upon him." "Then said Jesus unto him go and do thou likewise."

3. *Man's relation to God.* It was Jesus who said, "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart, and with all of thy soul, and with all of thy strength, and with all thy mind." It was Jesus who gave to those who trust Him the splendid conception of the Fatherhood of God. Jesus did not teach that God stands in that endearing relation to all his creatures. He is the Father of all men in the sense of being their Creator. But Jesus uses the term of Father, in comforting sense, to God's redeemed children. It applies to those who accept Christ as a Saviour. He taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father which art in Heaven." This is evident by the contrast in the context.

Listen! "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the Heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." "Be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." "After this manner, therefore, pray ye, 'Our Father which art in Heaven.'" Certain blessings God bestows upon all men, "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." He is Father in a different sense to those who believe. The distinction is clearly made by Paul in the eighth chapter of Romans, the theme of which is the Security of Believers. The whole chapter draws a radical distinction between the children of God by nature, and the children of God by grace. He says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." Further on He says, "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!" This Truth is clearly stated again by Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, "God sent forth His son to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons—and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son, into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." We become the children of God, by being adopted into His family, through "Our acceptance in the beloved."

The first recorded word of the public ministry of Christ is the word, "Repent." The coming of Jesus into this world, His mission, His teaching, can be explained in no other way than that, "He came to seek and to save that which was lost."

It was Jesus who said, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Jesus gave that marvelous description of judgment: "Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world." "Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Jesus said, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Some, one way, some, another, Jesus says. Don't you think He will keep His word? Surely He will. Jesus said, "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works, and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." "Many—many—many shall say." Will you be one of the many? It is possible. It may be probable. Is it not certain if you continue to reject Christ? The mere possibility of your being one of the many is appalling. Jesus said, "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself, and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man." Marvel not at this for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth. They that have done good

unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Jesus said that—the world's ideal. Jesus, in whom His enemies could find no fault, said that. Jesus, whom you believe and know to be infinitely perfect. Jesus the son of God, Jesus the Saviour of men, said that. I would rather believe Him than all the best men of earth, to say nothing of the critics, and skeptics and infidels and scoffers. I know He can be trusted.

A recent writer says he once heard Hugh Price Hughes in St. James Hall, London, when he was demolishing with characteristic vigor an imaginary opponent of the Christian religion. The opponent said, "Your opinion, sir, is worthless—you are prejudiced in favor of Jesus Christ." Mr. Hughes' splendid reply was, "Prejudiced in favor of Jesus Christ. Of course, I am. Who could help it, who has known Him for thirty years."

Jesus said, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your House is left unto you desolate." Jesus said that. Why? Because He desired it? No. It broke His heart to say it. I say it reverently, He said it because He could not help it. Jesus Himself will not save you unless you are willing to be saved. When you thrust Him out you thrust yourself out. "How often would I, but ye would not." "All the people were very attentive to hear Him." But it is not enough to hear. Remember what He said, "And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand." You know the result. "And it fell." "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them,

I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon the rock." You know the result. "It fell not."

How can you defer your flight to Christ another moment? Are your loved ones and friends saved? How can you be indifferent for another moment to their condition? This question must be settled, you know that. Better settle it now. If you don't know that, Jesus, your best friend, does know it. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." How glorious the future to those who believe! Jesus said, "In my Father's House are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day." "I flee unto Thee to hide me."

VIII

An ILLUSTRATION *of* PROVIDENCE

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."—DEUT. 32:11-12.

THE Lord thinketh upon me." This is wonderful. There are many strange things in this world. But none stranger than this—that God is interested in me and that He uses His power to develop me. Strange that we sometimes grow impatient because we think God has interfered with us. Sad indeed is the lot of that man, who acts as if there were no God, and who is content to believe himself sufficiently strong to meet the contending forces that threaten to overcome him. "Blessed is that man whose hope the Lord is." I need a being who knows me through and through and who is able and willing to do for me, "exceeding abundantly above all that I can ask or think." I find such a being in God, and if I am willing to place myself in His hands He will surely make of me that which I desire to be, and which I, in my weakness, am unable to become.

In this passage of Scripture we have the Divine side of the great Plan of Salvation emphasized. "The description is of a female eagle exciting her young ones in teaching them to fly, and afterwards in guarding with the greatest care, lest the weak should receive harm." Three main thoughts are suggested by this passage. These are:

I. Her Purpose.
II. Her Plan.
III. Her Protection.

I. Her Purpose

"She aims at teaching self-reliance." Someone says, "I once saw a very interesting sight above one of the crags of Ben Nevis. Two parent eagles were teaching their offspring, two young birds, the maneuvers of flight. They began by rising from the top of a mountain in the eye of the Sun. It was about mid-day and bright for this climate. They at first made small circles, and the young imitated them. They paused on their wings, waiting till they had made their first flight, holding them on their expanded wings when they appeared exhausted and then took a second and larger gyration, always rising toward the sun and enlarging their circle of flight so as to make a gradually ascending spiral." "The general reference is to God's fostering care of Israel, and especially His dealing with them, when 'He suffered their manners in the wilderness.'" "His purpose was to discipline them and train them for what they were appointed to do." "God's children must be trained to prompt, fearless action." Our action is to be in a spirit of dependence, but it is to be active and not passive dependence. The thoughtful parent watches the child. He sees in him possibilities of development. He studies the disposition carefully and weighs the influence of training. He has a purpose to accomplish in the life of the child. He knows that the years will not all deal gently with him. He wishes him prepared for the coming emergencies. He desires to fortify him against approaching dangers and to prepare him to meet future storms. In Germany every young man of sound constitution is required to join the army at an early age and to continue in the service for a period of years. The aim of this requirement is to make them skillful in military affairs and to prepare them for any emergency of attack.

For a period of five years, we are told, Porpora, who trained the great singer, Caffarelli, would permit him to try nothing but a series of scales and exercises—all of which he wrote down successively on a single sheet of paper. In the sixth year he proceeded to give his scholar instructions in articulation, pronunciation and declamation. Caffarelli submitted without a murmur to this unexampled discipline, though even at the end of six years, he imagined he had gotten a very little way beyond the mere rudiments of the art. But, to his astonishment, his master one day thus addressed him—"Young man, you may now leave me. You have nothing more to learn from me, and are the greatest singer in the world." God takes pains with us. He has a purpose in your life and mine. He aims at something noble for us and He will surely carry out His plans. Let us now observe the

II. PLAN OF THE EAGLE

She stirs up her nest. "She does not leave her brood to the ignoble ease they would perhaps prefer. So God rouses His people to action by making their place uneasy for them —by placing them in trying situations, by removing comforts—by the stimulus of necessity, by the sharp provocation of afflictions He goads them to think, act and put forth the powers that are in them." The nest is such a comfortable place for the little eaglets. They don't want to be disturbed. How startled they appear as the parent eagle begins to stir the nest, and so scatter the material of which it is composed as to throw them out to contend with the elements. But the old eagle knows that this method must be adopted, otherwise there is no way of accomplishing what she knows is best. So God, our Father, sees what a comfortable place we have. He knows how natural it is for us to desire to

remain undisturbed. He knows we love our ease. This world has many attractions. It is a beautiful place in which to live. There is such a variety to engage our activities and to invite our thoughts. So many pleasures to allure us. The ingenuity of man is taxed to furnish us with all sorts of amusement. Then there are desires so natural to us that we want to gratify. We have our minds on making for ourselves beautiful homes. We think when we secure them that there is nothing to do but to enjoy them. The mother seems so happy in that home and the children are full of life and merry laughter. The father has struggled for many years to reach the end he has now attained. He now exults in his heaven on earth. His treasures are there, and his heart also. But God has set His seal upon these loved ones. They are His chosen. They are among the number that the Father has given Christ and God has His eye upon them. They are not thinking enough of their God. The ties of home and of love have knit them so closely that they are following in thought and purpose their own selfish desires. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with Him." That family is at ease. Stirring-up time is coming. By and by the Angel of Death enters that home. One of the most beautiful in the household is taken. It seems that with ruthless hand the reaper mows down and garners for the skies a beautiful plant to blossom in the fields of Heaven. "It is said that gardeners sometimes, when they would bring a rose to richer flowering, deprive it, for a season, of light and moisture. Silent and dark it stands dropping one fading leaf after another, and seeming to go down patiently to death. But when every leaf is dropped and the plant stands stripped to the uttermost, a new life is even then working in the buds, from which shall spring a tender foli-

age, a brighter wealth of flowers. So often in celestial gardening, every leaf of earthly joy must drop before a new and Divine blossom visits the soul."

We might as well grasp this truth—God is going to make of us what He intends us to be. "Man is the iron and God is the smith, and we are always either in the forge, or on the anvil. God is shaping us for higher things." We can't get away from Him. Take the history of Israel from beginning to end, and you will observe that "As an eagle stirreth up her nest so the Lord alone did lead him." Observe the history of their leader—Moses. God wanted him to go down into Egypt. God said, "Go down to Pharaoh." Moses makes seven excuses. "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh?" "Behold when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them the God of your fathers has sent me unto you: and they shall say to me what is His name? What shall I say?" "Behold they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice for they will say, the Lord has not appeared unto thee." If you cannot prove that the Lord has appeared to you then you will never have power. "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since Thou hast spoken to thy servant, but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." "Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom Thy wilt send." You may send whom you like but I don't mean to go unless I am compelled. "Moses returned unto the Lord and said, Why is it that Thou hast sent me?" "Moses said, Behold I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?" God says to Moses, "Now thou shalt see what I will do." Four times He says, "I am the Lord." Seven things God promises to do. "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will rid you out of their bondage. I will redeem you with a stretched out arm. I will take you to me for a people. I

will be to you a God. I will bring you in unto the land. I will give it to you for an heritage." He made Moses do what He wanted him to do. A contest between God and man ends in man's submission, or disaster.

God sees Jonah. God beholds the wicked city of Nineveh. He calls Jonah to rise and go to the city and cry against it. But Jonah doesn't want to go. So he arises to flee from the presence of the Lord. Jonah goes to Joppa and finds a ship going to Tarshish. "So he paid the fare thereof and went down into it." There arises a mighty tempest upon the sea. The ship is in great danger. The men cast lots to find out for whose cause this evil is upon them. The lot falls on Jonah. They cast him into the sea. God prepares a great fish for him. Yes, "He paid the fare thereof." Just so my friends with you. You are sent from God for a purpose and whenever you flee from His presence you must pay the fare thereof. God will constrain you to do what He intends you to do. Stirring-up time is coming, and there is no mistake. The apostle Peter is an ardent follower of the Lord. He is ready to go with Him even unto death. But he gets into bad company and he denies his Lord. The Lord holds him accountable for this and looks at him. That look stirs him to the very depths, insomuch that he goes out and weeps bitterly. My brother, the greatest factor in your life is God, and whenever you lose sight of this fact God will bring it to your remembrance. He has laid upon you certain duties and responsibilities. If you neglect them, stirring-up time is coming. If you neglect daily prayer and start out without looking to God for guidance, stirring-up time is coming. If you neglect the services of the Sanctuary, and only go when it suits your convenience, stirring-up time is coming. If you neglect family worship and lead not to the THRONE OF GRACE the loved ones that God

has given you, stirring-up time is coming. If you neglect study of God's word and fail to make it "A lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path," stirring-up time is coming. If you allow some slight, or injury, real or imaginary, to prevent you from doing your duty; if you do not hear and heed the warnings of God's ministers, who watch for your souls; if you prevent their influence by criticizing them; if you allow evils to exist that you may prevent, stirring-up time is coming. Briefly, if you fail to realize your dependence upon God and to recognize the supremacy of His claims upon your thought and life, stirring-up time is coming. The Lord is going to lead you and He does not intend any strange god to be with you.

You may endeavor to make your religious life an incident instead of a glorious reality, you may stress duty and make no grand entrance into the life of Christian privilege. God didn't make you to give your thoughts to things that you may blindly think contribute to your temporal prosperity. If you substitute the Almighty Dollar for the Almighty God, stirring-up time is coming. God didn't create you to be mastered by your business, by your household cares, by your profession. He made you to glorify Himself and to dignify every thought and act of your life with the motive that Christ carried into even the every-day affairs of life. God made you to be holy. He has called you to righteousness. He has made you a new creature. He expects to bring you into the promised land, though you may be called to pass through the Red Sea, through the wilderness. He will see to it that you are refined and purified, though you must be placed in the furnace. The God who sits in the heavens, nevertheless rules in the affairs of men. He lays bare His almighty arm in behalf of those whom He has chosen in Christ. Therefore, my brother, when things seem dark,

when burdens settle upon you, when you are entangled, examine yourself carefully. See if you have been living as becomes a child of God. When all these things are against you, you should seek to ascertain if it is not the stirring-up time in your life that precedes the accomplishment of God's purpose.

Another thought suggested by the text—

III. The Protection of the Eagle

It is true she stirs up the nest. But she doesn't leave the young. She plays the part of the helper. She gives them support and cares for them. "She spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings." And so "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "He shall cover thee with His feathers and under His wings shalt thou trust." "They that wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as eagles." The eagle usually builds her nest in some great cliff where man can with great danger go. It is said that when she is training the eaglets to fly she sails around near by watching intently. Sometimes she permits them to grow almost exhausted from training, and when they lose strength and are in danger of falling upon the rocks below, the old eagle swoops down and bears them on her wings. So God deals with us. "It is written He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

There is magnificent encouragement in the thought of God's protection. All His children, without a single exception, can testify to His faithfulness. His method of dealing with us is stirring us up, but He is ever ready to assist. He does call us to pass through the waters but He says, "I will

be with thee." He does permit fiery trials, but His purpose is gracious.

"The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine."

He did turn Peter over to Satan that he might sift him as wheat, but He said to him, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

Are you in the midst of any great temptation? Do you see no way of escape? The Lord sees and He makes intercession for you. Temptations are common to men, but the Lord provides a way of escape. Reckon on Him. He is more interested in your achieving victory than you are, yourself. He is pledged to deliver you. He did permit Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to be cast into the fiery furnace, but He delivered them. He did permit Daniel to be cast into the lions' den, but the cruel beasts did him no harm. He did refuse Moses entrance into the promised land, but Moses came by way of Heaven and saw the divine glory of the transfiguration of Christ in the very heart of Canaan. He did permit Joseph to be sold into Egypt but He let them make him ruler over all the land. He did permit Jacob to be deceived by his sons and to mourn for the loss of Joseph, but He also permitted him to go down and see Joseph highly exalted in Egypt. He did permit Jonah to suffer, but He allowed him to bring the wicked city of Nineveh to righteousness. He did permit Paul to be beaten with rods and to be exposed to all sorts of peril, but out of them all He delivered him. He did permit him to have the thorn in the flesh but He made good His promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee." He did permit him to be cast into prison, but He gave him songs in the night and when his earthly career was ended he calmly said, "The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good

fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." He did permit John to be banished to the Isle of Patmos, but He gave him there visions of "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Yes, my brother, "The Lord thinketh upon you." You sometimes feel, "No man careth for my soul." God cares. The race you are making is of such importance with God that you are surrounded with "a great cloud of witnesses." He wants you to win. The Hosts of Heaven desire to mark you at the goal. He does turn you, twist you, wrest you, stir you, but He does it in order to save you.

Get hold of this thought—God is after me, God is seeking me, God wants me. I am not what I ought to be, but He intends to make something out of me. I reach out after Him feebly, but He puts underneath me the everlasting arms of His love. I hesitate and falter, but there is with Him neither "variableness, nor shadow of turning." "He is the same yesterday, today and forever." He has purposed in eternity to bring me into His rest and peace and joy and love. He may lead through many trials but we are to think not so much of the way as of the Leader. We pray, be thou my guide, and God answers the prayer, but because we do not understand the way we doubt the Leader. "The Lord alone did lead him." That's enough. It makes no difference where I am led if God is leading me.

"He leadeth me! O blessed thought,
O words with heavenly comfort fraught,
What e'er I do, where e'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

"Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

"Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur, nor repine,
Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.

"And when my task on earth is done,
When by Thy grace the victory's won,
Even death's cold wave I will not flee,
Since God through Jordan leadeth me."

No clouds, no glory. A writer says, "I watched a glorious sunset, marveling at the beauty wherewith the evening skies were all ablaze and adoring Him who gave them their matchless coloring. On the next evening I resorted to the same spot, hoping to be again enraptured with the gorgeous pomp of ending day, but there were no clouds and therefore no glories. True, the canopy of sapphire was there, but no magnificent array of clouds to form golden masses with edges of burning crimson, or islands of loveliest hue set in a sea of emerald. There were no great conflagrations of splendor, or flashing peaks of mountains of fire." "The sun was as bright as before, but for lack of dark clouds on which to pour out his lustre, his magnificence was unrevealed. A man who should live and die without trials would be like a setting sun without clouds."

"Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." But we must enter. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

"O morning Land! O morning Land!"

IX

DISCIPLESHIP

"Follow Me."—Matt. 9:9.

The word discipleship suggests at once two persons—one a teacher, the other a learner; one a leader, the other a follower; one a master, the other a servant. To be a disciple of Christ means to be a pupil of Christ, a follower of Christ, and a servant of Christ.

Jesus saw a man named Matthew. "He saith unto him, follow me, and he arose and followed him." Two persons demand our attention—Jesus and Matthew. Jesus calls; Matthew responds and becomes a disciple. One by one, men are called, and one by one men respond; one by one they follow Christ, and one by one they are conducted into His fellowship here and into His presence where there is fulness of joy hereafter.

To ask some one to follow you is to assume great responsibility. The general who issues to his soldiers the command "Follow me" takes upon himself an impressive obligation. Jesus Christ could not issue such a command and not be equal to the task of leadership. For Him to say, "Follow me," suggests that He is divine; that He has confidence in Himself; that He has blessings for those who obey.

I. Discipleship—Its Challenge

It is authoritative; it is gracious; it is urgent; it is personal.

1. *It is Authoritative.* Mark the word Master so frequently used by His early disciples. It strikes the note of authority; it suggests the idea of supremacy. The commands of Christ come from the "King of Kings and the Lord of Lords." We have governmental authority, military authority, parental authority, and obedience to these is recognized as righteous and expedient. Beyond all these stands Christ. He occupies a seat at God's right hand—the place of power. The Scriptures give to Him the place of pre-eminence. The unique events of His life all declare His regal authority. His Incarnation, Inauguration, Transfiguration, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, prove His authority to speak the final word. "He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come." "Who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him." Response to the call of Christ to discipleship is not optional. It is imperative.

2. *It is Gracious*—this call to discipleship. It is the "Grace of God that brings salvation." Sinful by nature and by practice, we have no claim on Christ. The prerogatives of mercy and forgiveness are with God, and these are the shining elements that glisten on the standard of the Cross. Sinful man is unable to devise the plan or to dictate the plea that makes effectual approach to God. Jesus Christ steps into the breach and by the rendition of a perfect righteousness satisfies the demands of God and makes His obedience unto death the basis of reconciliation. He becomes our peace. The genius of the call to discipleship is found in the compassionate heart of God, in the "quality

of mercy that is not strained," in the love that is inseparable from the infinite Father's heart.

3. *It is Urgent.* The call of discipleship challenges immediate response. The condition of sin in which we find ourselves argues now. The danger to which our sins expose us argues now. The brevity of life clamors now. The cumulative effects of sin, the hardening processes of habit make an impressive appeal for instant response. Man's supreme obligation is allegiance to Jesus Christ. The call that He makes, being both authoritative and gracious, enforces the necessity and desirableness of saying at once, "Here am I." The opportunities that wane with the passing hours, each and all of them, plead for our Christian consecration. The issues of eternity, which our attitude to the Divine Voice determines, forbid a moment's delay. Our own need of Christ and His desire for us constitute a reason for immediate enlistment under His banner. The awful warnings against a refusal of Christ and the glorious promises associated with the acceptance of Christ exclaim with commanding emphasis, "Hear ye Him."

4. *It is Personal.* "The Master is come and calleth for *thee.*" Christ has work for the individual. He says, "Give me thine heart." "What shall I do with Jesus?" He had a personal word for His disciples. To Philip He said, "Follow me." To Matthew He said, "Follow me." The call to discipleship is just as personal as though I were the only person in all the world to hear His voice. Christ is represented by the shepherd who went out for the one lost sheep; by the woman who searched for the one lost piece of money. To my conscience He addresses His claims. Into my heart He desires to enter. In my soul He yearns to dwell. In my life He wishes to reign. Over my destiny He pleads to preside. Upon my head He would

place the imperishable crown. For me He has gone to prepare a place. To me He says, If I will hear and heed His call "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Every man is to stand out separate and distinct from every other relation and person. He must believe and know that Christ is saying to him, "Follow me." Be My disciple.

II. DISCIPLESHIP—ITS COST

We cannot follow Christ without paying the price. The greatest privilege of life cannot be enjoyed for nothing.

1. *Discipleship Costs Submission.* We must surrender our will to the will of Christ. We must leave the choosing of our course to Him. However much we may think we know, we must allow our guide to go before. The soldier submits his will to the commander. The pupil submits his will to the teacher. The child submits his will to the parent. The Master cannot allow His servant to do as the servant pleases. The will of the disciple necessarily merges into the will of the Master. Jesus has His own terms. They are unconditional surrender.

2. *Discipleship Costs Sacrifice.* His early disciples, we are told, left all and followed Him. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." The simple, solemn teaching of these passages is that Jesus Christ is to be supreme in our thoughts, in our affections, in our endeavors. No earthly tie, no earthly ambition, no earthly affection, is to rival our loyalty to Him. We must see "Jesus only." We must "crown Him Lord of all." Have

we an idol—one for whom we have deeper love than we have for Christ—our beloved companion, our children, our home, our business? Do we find pleasure in giving to our family and to ourselves; and do we complain when we are called upon to give to the advancement of Christ's cause? What proportion of our thought, our energy and our means are we giving to ourselves and to our earthly loved ones, and what proportion are we giving to Christ, "Who gave himself for us?" How many times and in how many ways have we actually denied ourselves and our loved ones that we might the better serve Christ? How many trivial things have we allowed to exact our means and to absorb our attention?

The great question is not how many things I can do and still maintain my right to be called a disciple, but how many things I can surrender and thus prove my allegiance to Christ. Not what harm there is in this and that and the other, but whether indulgence in these things robs me of the joy I ought to have in following Christ and lessens the sum-total of my Christian influence. Discipleship means sacrifice. We must experience what is involved in the language of the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ" before we can confidently exclaim, "Christ liveth in me."

3. *Discipleship Costs Service.* "Jesus went about doing good." He said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The first word of Christ is "Follow me." The second is, "Go work in my vineyard." To be a disciple of Christ means to follow Christ in ministry to the sick, in sympathy with the sorrowing, in consolation to the afflicted, in kindness to the poor, in direction to the perplexed, in warning to the erring, in rescue of the lost, in prayer and purpose for all. How incongruous for a disciple of Christ

to say, There is nothing for me to do. There is everything for you to do. You have a heart to sympathize, a tongue to speak, a hand to assist, feet to take you on errands of mercy, eyes to see, ears to hear. "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." No man can follow Christ without serving Christ. If we are not serving Christ, we are not following Christ. We can't claim that Christ is our Master—that we are His disciples—unless we pray, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

"There is a work for me and a work for you,
Something for each of us now to do."

III. DISCIPLESHIP—ITS INCENTIVE

1. *Progress.* There is an indescribable fascination in advancement. With what increasing interest we behold the growth and development of the child. The cultivation of a talent is a pleasure. Indications of progress delight us—material progress, intellectual progress, spiritual progress. But how true "The soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul." What an incentive to be a disciple of Christ is the assurance of progress! It is ours to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ." The "much more" is a constant challenge to our persistent continuance. With what ardor Paul expresses his purpose: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the

mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The Psalmist says, "Thou wilt show me the path of life." That path we enter when we become disciples of Christ, and as we follow we find that "The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." What an urgent incentive to follow Christ, the assurance of the prophet, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord."

2. *Another Incentive is Power.* How utterly helpless we are by nature! What things we desire to do that we are unable to do! There is probably nothing more tantalizing than the desire to do the things we are unable to do. We have a picture of this condition in the lame man "who sat at the gate of the temple, called Beautiful." He wanted to enter, but he could not. What a transformation wrought when this power was given him by the apostles! "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." "Without me ye can do nothing." How different when Christ imparts His strength! Hear Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Hear Jesus, "Ye shall receive power." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do ye shall do also, and greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father." What an incentive to follow Christ! It means conscious power in the spiritual realm; power to the parent to impress the child; power to the Sabbath-School teacher to impart the truth; power to the minister to preach the Gospel; power to do what needs to be done and what we desire to do. "Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

3. *Another Incentive to Follow Christ is Preferment.* Jesus exalts to positions of conspicuous honor those who follow Him. To be a disciple of Christ is enough to make

the simplest name immortal. What group, either in secular or sacred history, commands such unstinted admiration as the twelve apostles. Then there is Knox and Calvin, and Luther and Wesley, and Whitfield and Spurgeon, and Moody. Gypsy Smith is said to be the most popular man in the British Empire. Even the world comes to regard with praise and gratitude those who are true to Christ. Jesus grows greater with the years. He is the world's ideal made actual. There was an exact correspondence between what He taught and what He lived. He shares His honors with all His disciples. There is sufficient glory for generous distribution. Things are worth what they cost. We have to climb to reach the heights, but if we climb we shall stand on the summit, and all the land we see shall be ours. Crucifixion is painful and humiliating, but it makes possible resurrection victory and ascension glory. "Then answered Peter and said unto Him, behold we have forsaken all and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

IV. DISCIPLESHIP—ITS REWARD

1. *One Reward of Discipleship is Sanction.* The smile of God's approval falls with cheering radiance upon the pathway of the disciple of Christ. The Father said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." His charac-

ter, His purpose, His mission, His work, all have my sanction my approval. How much it means to have the approval of God! The approval of friends is gratifying. The approval of conscience is invaluable. But the approval of God is all-sufficient. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." "The smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul."

2. *Another Reward is Security.* "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "He is the Good Shepherd who goeth before His sheep." "He knoweth them by name." "No one is able to pluck them out of His hand." He hurls Himself in His omnipotent strength against all His enemies and our enemies, and they fall back in irretrievable defeat. "Those thou hast given me I have kept." As His disciples march on close to Him who guides their footsteps, written upon their hearts in letters that cannot be effaced is that word which denotes security because traced with the efficacious blood of their Redeemer—"Kept."

3. *The crowning reward of discipleship is Satisfaction.* From manger to throne is a long journey. The path is by no means strewn with flowers all the way. The road is often rough and steep, but this will seem nothing when we get to the end of the way. The consummation of God's matchless scheme is disclosed in two passages of Scripture: "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied," and "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." Neither is possible without the other, and both are certain and inevitable. Somehow the disciples of Christ are gloriously near to His great heart. Not only are our interests bound up with His, but His interests are indissolu-

bly bound up with ours. "The Lord's portion is His people." God's comprehensive provision is flung at the feet of the disciples of Christ. Its utmost significance presses for our appropriation.

"My heavenly home is bright and fair,
Nor pain, nor death can enter there;
Its glittering towers the sun outshine,
That heavenly mansion shall be mine."

Jesus has gone before, and the purpose of His departure He disclosed to His disciples. "I go to prepare a place for you," and He says, "Thou shalt follow Me afterwards." "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also." "Thou wilt show me the path of life." "In Thy presence is fulness of joy and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." No monument of marble, or brass, or stone, can shine and endure as the memorial that Christ establishes in the life of His consecrated disciple.

DISCIPLESHIP

Its Challenge: Authoritative, Gracious, Urgent, Personal.

Its Cost: Submission, Sacrifice, Service.

Its Incentive: Progress, Power, Preferment.

Its Reward: Sanction, Security, Satisfaction.

"Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
Of our life's wild restless sea;
Day by day His sweet voice soundeth,
Saying, 'Christian, follow me.'

"Jesus calls us from the worship
Of the vain world's golden store
From each idol that would keep us,
Saying, 'Christian, love me more.'

"In our joys and in our sorrows,
Days of toil and hours of ease,
Still, He calls in cares and pleasures,
'Christian, love me more than these.'

"Jesus calls us; by Thy mercies,
Savior, may we hear Thy call?
Give our hearts to Thy obedience,
Serve and love Thee best of all.

"Savior, I follow on guided by Thee,
Seeing not yet the hand that leadeth me,
Hushed be my heart and still, fear I no further ill,
Only to meet Thy will, my will shall be.

"Savior, I long to walk closer to Thee,
Led by Thy guiding hand, ever to be
Constantly near Thy side, quickened and purified,
Living for Him who died freely for me."

The Gate of Death, the Captain of our Salvation, has opened wide for our abundant entrance into "The inheritance of the saints."

When in the Christian disciple's last hour, the messenger, in tones of tenderness, shall announce to his listening ears: "The Master is come and calleth for thee"—that hour from which we physically shrink, will be radiant with

prophecy of exaltation. We shall say, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He will graciously suffer His beloved disciple to lean upon His bosom, and in his ears He will whisper, "Friend, come up higher." We shall enter the land where "the sun never sets and the leaves never fade." O, joy unspeakable for the enraptured soul!

X

DEMONSTRATIVE CHRISTIANITY

"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."—Ps. 107:2.

In this language the Psalmist makes a plea for demonstrative Christianity. If any man has whereof he can speak, that man is the Christian. He is related to the best and most permanent realities in this life and in that which is to come. He has more than any other to engage his thought, to enlist his energy, to inspire his soul—always something to purpose, something to do, something to anticipate. His position is one of conspicuous importance. Unto him much has been given, of him much is required.

The Lord Jesus Christ was a great Teacher. From His matchless lips fell the words that have enriched the souls of men through the centuries. He spoke of His origin, His mission, His crucifixion, His resurrection, of the Home He had left, of the Home to which He would return; with such earnestness and zeal did He speak that the record is, "And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority and not as the Scribes." His recorded words and deeds are many, but doubtless much said and done by our Lord has not been preserved, for the inspired Apostle John says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

Jesus talked about those things nearest and dearest to His heart—things of spiritual importance. Those who heard Him were doubtless impressed with the truth of this

Scripture, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." I sometimes think that the most charitable explanation of the aversion to conversation on spiritual subjects by many persons is that they have but little in the heart, and hence are able to say but little. "We can but speak the things we have seen and heard."

Conscious impression is necessary to generous expression. This matter of speaking is not only encouraged by our Saviour, but the Apostle Paul gives us this inspired injunction, "To communicate forget not." And the sweet singer of Israel strikes this note with true emphasis, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." Surely we are in line with the worthies when we give expression to our aspirations and experiences. This is a kind of apostolic succession which we may all practice with great profit.

REDEMPTION A CAUSE FOR REJOICING

Christians ought to be demonstrative because they are redeemed. The Scriptures record that God's people are redeemed from bondage, from the curse of the law, from the enemy; that their soul and their life are redeemed; that they are redeemed not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ; and to focus and climax this thought of redemption we have the declaration of the Apostle John in Revelation, referring to Christ the Lamb, "Thou hast redeemed us to God."

Now, surely, the precious boon of redemption calls with unhindered emphasis for a *demonstrative Christianity* that *expresses* and *commends* the "Grace of God which bringeth salvation." To the "redeemed of the Lord" the Psalmist says, "Say so." This demonstration ought to be by word of mouth and heart and act of life.

Such demonstrativeness we owe to ourselves, to others, and to God. It does an individual incalculable personal good to express himself. His own sense of duty and gratitude multiply by putting in words what he feels in his heart. He gets a clearer idea of his own relations, and fixes more firmly his purpose to glorify God. Then, too, our experiences expressed are of inestimable benefit to others who are struggling with similar difficulties and running for the same goal.

Then, too, the glory of God is our chief end, and it is our high privilege, as well as duty, "To *show forth* the praises of Him who has brought us from darkness into marvelous light."

HOW WE MAY SHOW OUR FAITH

There are many ways in which we can demonstrate our belief and joy in Christ. Certainly we should feel an active and sincere interest in all that concerns the good of others. Our *words* go far in this commendable direction. The words which are not spoken, which might have been said for the strengthening of others, would fill many volumes. It is not enough to feel, nor to desire, nor to purpose. We ought to *speak*. Favors conferred call for *expression* of gratitude.

Some one has suffered reverses. He may *think* you feel for him, but if with sincerity you express your sympathy, he knows, and knowledge is better than supposition. A word is needed and a word ought to be spoken.

A great sorrow has fallen upon a home—hearts are broken. The home may be one where luxury abounds, or it may be of meager proportions. Sympathy expressed is demanded. Hearts beneath faded garments beat just as true and ache just as much as other hearts. They are just

as susceptible to sorrow and to sympathy. Do you feel for them? Well and good, but not sufficient. Let the redeemed of the Lord *say so*.

You read a helpful book. It changes your thoughts and purposes completely. The author has spent a life of study and prayer to write it. It does you good—*you* know it, but how is *he* to know that you are helped? Would it not encourage him and inspire him to write perhaps another and better book if he knew its value to you? Write him a personal letter that he may feel the thrill of interest awakened in your heart by its contents.

There is a consecrated character with whom you have been privileged to associate. Her life has been a benediction to you. From her patience, her energy, her conversation, her zeal, her good deeds, her godly life, you have drawn inspiration for years. She has been your spiritual benefactor. Perpetual dividends you have declared on her capital and investment. You probably owe more to her than you would to the person who would give you a fortune in money. You would doubtless be extravagant in your expressions of gratitude for the material fortune. Have you ever told this other and greater benefactor of your indebtedness?

SPEAK OFTEN WITH ONE ANOTHER

Then there are those in the Church of God, who are peculiarly interested in the prosperity of Zion. Appropropriate indeed to their zeal are these words:

"For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end."

They are alert, they are suggestive, they are effective. Almost every church has some of these characters. We owe them our gratitude. He may be an Elder, or a Deacon, or a Sabbath-school superintendent. Have you ever taken either by the hand and said, "I appreciate for Christ's sake and for the Church's sake your labor of love?"

There is your Sabbath-school teacher, deeply interested in your spiritual welfare. Sometimes she wonders whether you are responsive to her instruction. This anxiety she may have not because of anything you have said, but because of many things you have not said. She may go out into eternity with a heart burdened because you have neglected to *"say so."* Lift that burden. You may feel an affection and an appreciation for that teacher. But speak!

There is that bright, dutiful Sabbath-school scholar; always on time, attentive to your instruction, with a prepared lesson, exerting a wholesome influence on the other members of the class. He or she will appreciate an expression of commendation from you.

There is that friend, maybe a member of your family; you are interested in his soul, you bear him frequently on your heart, you pray daily that he may be led to rejoice in a personal Saviour. Does he know the interest you have in him? The time will come when his ears are closed. Take him by the hand, look him in the eyes, tell him your intense secret; say to him, "I carry your soul on my soul day and night."

And your minister. Don't forget him. He knows you have cares and trials and manifold duties, but he has the same. He is human just like you are. You have some cares that he hasn't; but he has some that you haven't; some burdens belong peculiarly to preachers. Their responsibility is glorious, but O, it is appalling also. To try

to reach and help all; to discover the key that unlocks this and that individual's heart; to preach the sermon that finds the conscience and stirs the soul; to live the life that God, his people and the community require of him; to deal wisely and helpfully with all questions presented; to comfort the heart that is burdened; to dry the tearful eyes; to be as "wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove." That's no easy place to fill. If you appreciate your minister, tell him so; if you are helped by his sermons, tell him so.

A PASTOR'S LONELINESS

There are hours in the life of every preacher when a word of encouragement is inexpressibly sweet and precious. A preacher with brains in his head and grace in his heart cannot be spoiled by words of commendation. If we grant, for argument's sake, that commendation swells a man's head, lack of commendation often breaks his heart. Better have the swollen head than the broken heart.

Then the word of encouragement needs to be spoken by the pastor to the church members individually and collectively. To my own people recently I expressed my gratitude to God and to them for two things especially. First, for the harmony that prevails in our ranks. May this harmony never be disturbed. If we keep close to Christ we will preserve this spirit. Thank God for it—the product of brotherly love, the characteristic badge of discipleship. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another."

Secondly, the commendable liberality of the church, their obedience to the apostles' injunction, "See that ye abound in this grace also," the grace of giving, partakers in the splendid encomium, "God loveth a cheerful giver."

THE TESTIMONY OF OUR LIVES

Then our deeds should demonstrate our faith and emphasize our allegiance to Christ. Our whole life should be an impressive testimony, our walk, our conversation, our service. We should prove by church loyalty, by faithful attendance, by our manifest zeal that we appreciate our redemption and magnify our calling.

"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so" and "say so" to the Lord. Morning, noon and evening, let us lift up our hearts to God and tell Him that we appreciate His goodness and mercy. Let us *"say so."* Let us be constantly looking toward heaven, and with a heart that clamors for utterance through the lips, let us say, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

A demonstrative Christianity! I unite with the Psalmist in his eloquent and urgent plea. He does not by these words mean for us to flatter each other, or to say to God what we do not mean. He means for us to speak what we feel, to always speak sincerely, to tell each other and to tell the Lord what He has done for our souls.

Some words are better unspoken;
The thought they express we dread.
But, O, there are hearts all broken
By the words that are never said.

XI

A GOOD WORKMAN

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
II Tim. 2:15.

Ruskin says, "The law of nature is that a certain quantity of work is necessary to produce a certain quantity of good of any kind whatever. If you want knowledge, you must toil for it; if food, you must toil for it; if pleasure, you must toil for it. From the particles of dust at our feet to man, the last stroke of God's handiwork, all bear the impress of the law of labor. The earth is one vast laboratory where decomposition and re-formation are constantly going on. The blast of Nature's furnace never ceases and its fires never burn low. The lichen of the rock and the oak of the forest, each works out the problem of its own existence. The earth, the air, and the water teem with busy life. The world is animated with the same spirit, onward, unceasingly, unwearied, age after age, it pursues its course, itself, with all it contains, a perpetual lesson of industry to man. The joyous song of labor sounds out from the million-voiced earth and the rolling spheres join the universal chorus."

Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." The call to industry is divine, urgent and imperative. The Bible teaches industry, enforces its necessity and desirableness by the accomplishment of its illustrious worthies and crowns labor with the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, who wrought for humanity's good with intelligent zeal and matchless success. With hand and head and heart the Apostle Paul unremittingly toiled and charged his spiritual

son Timothy—to pursue a similar course. "Study to show thyself approved unto God—a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

This injunction suggests the theme, A Good Workman, and also embodies the constituent elements of the same, which are Application, Discrimination, Approbation, and Compensation.

I. Application—"Study." The mind is the controlling factor in effective work. Thought is a primal force. "Think on these things," says the Apostle. Men have ascertained that "Labor is the price of success." In every sphere the demand is efficiency. Even genius is but another name for hard work and close application.

I recently read an article entitled "The failures of genius"—the pathetic record of men who were gifted but whose lives had been a stupendous failure. Work, more than genius, is success. History records few failures of men and women who have been persistent toilers. No other talent is comparable to application. There is no satisfying success apart from application. Even the natural genius, though he may accomplish much, falls far short of his responsibility if he fails to link work with his talent. The genius may be a man of five talents, but not to use them brands him a failure, while the man with two talents diligently used is a real success. Men and women of application, in all ages, have been the real benefactors, they are the ones who have dignified their respective spheres and encouraged others to attain, or to surpass their standard. The captains of industry are men of study, of application. They have mastered principles. So with our artists. They have given themselves to the study of great models, and have conquered the lights and shades. The skillful musicians have studied long and practiced well. Our statesmen have studied the science of gov-

ernment and obtained masterful grasp on the problems with which civilization has been confronted. Demosthenes made himself an orator by speaking with pebbles in his mouth to correct his imperfect articulation. Phillips Brooks, the Demosthenes of the American pulpit, overcame an impediment in his speech by learning to speak with startling rapidity. Study, study, study, application, application, application.

This same principle is regnant in the spiritual realm. We can't do God's work unless we know what God's work is, and we can't know what God's work is unless we study, apply ourselves. There is no question but "There is a work for me and a work for you, something for each of us now to do." The call of Christ is a personal call to a personal work. Christ calls us to follow Him and to follow Him means to work with and for Him. We are struck in reading the New Testament with the zeal and activity of the converts. They regarded their acceptance of Christ as an opportunity and obligation for service. The same Christ who said "Come unto me" said in the same instant, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me," come, share, learn. Christ calls to salvation that we may be initiated into His service. He is our Pattern, and hence to imitate Him we must know Him, and to know Him we must study Him. Here in His word He has shown us the way. If we want to learn how to solve mathematical problems we must study arithmetic. If we wish to learn how to speak correctly we must study grammar and rhetoric. If I wish to learn how to serve Christ I must accept Him as my teacher and study His methods. So we see the absurdity of being a good workman without the study of the word of God, and of authors and men who have "searched the Scriptures." To be an efficient Sabbath School teacher challenges application

to the word of God, and to such literature as bears on this subject. To be efficient Elders and Deacons demands knowledge of the requirements of these offices and an impressive sense of the obligations assumed. To be missionary Christians, and every useful and happy Christian has the missionary spirit, we must study the Bible and inform ourselves as to the needs and accomplishments of the missionary work and workers. To be an efficient pastor and preacher a man must study God's word and learn the needs and aspirations of the human soul. The point I seek to emphasize is simple but fundamental. Application is imperative to success in any enterprise. It is none the less, yea, much more imperative in our church and Christian work. Have we realized this? Do we seek to discover the means of success in our spiritual calling? You are a member of the church and a professing Christian, you have a work to do that no other being on earth, and no angel in heaven can accomplish for your Lord. You can find no substitute. You can't serve by "proxy." "Study to show *thyself* approved unto God." Application—your own application.

II. Discrimination — *"Rightly dividing."* This is especially applicable to preachers. "Rightly dividing the word of Truth." The Book divinely inspired is to be the "Man of our counsel." We are to "preach the word"—the word of God—the word that "is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto the path" of mortals who are walking toward eternity and drawing nearer to the bound of life at each step. "The word that lives and abides forever"—the word by which we and those to whom we preach are to be judged when the secrets of all hearts are to be revealed.

Human sinfulness is too appalling, human need is too urgent, human life is too precious to warrant the minister to choose his theme and to formulate his discourse on any-

thing but the "word of Truth." This discrimination is of far-reaching importance. It means that we are to have an eye to the fundamental doctrines of the Bible—that we are to know them in their "separate places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals." We are to give to each truth its proportionate proclamation—the love of God—the holiness of God and the justice of God. Not love merely, not holiness merely, not justice merely, but love, holiness and justice.

Discrimination means also that we are to deal honestly with the Scriptures "Rightly dividing." We are not to wrest the Scriptures by reading into a passage that which is not there. We are not to seek to gain a reputation for novelty and originality by announcing a startling subject that marks a point of departure from the clear and accepted meaning of a passage of Scripture. We should earnestly ask the aid of the spirit in the interpretation of the text.

Discrimination also in the matter of the sermon. "Rightly dividing" the parts of the sermon—the introduction, the main points, the minor points, the conclusion. It requires thought to preach with clearness and efficiency "The glorious gospel." This discrimination will also make real and permanent in every discourse the central theme of the word of truth—"Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The discourses of one of our most eminent and useful preachers are notable for the stress placed upon Christ. Almost every point in the man's sermons leads to Christ. "He prepares the way of the Lord," and then climaxes with Jesus Christ—"The way." It is well for every sermon to converge in the "Cross of Christ."

The Gospel is the "Gospel of Christ." Let us be careful not to pervert the "Gospel of Christ" lest we come under the condemnation of the apostle. "Though we, or an angel

from heaven preach any other gospel unto you let him be accursed." We must be men, and men with a discriminating message—enforcing the claims of Christ—commending Him to every man's conscience for judgment—to every man's mind for acceptance—to every man's soul for entrance and possession. "Rightly dividing the word of truth."

III. Approbation. "Study to show thyself approved unto God." There are three approvals that cheer the good workman. The approval of himself, the approval of his fellowman, and the approval of God. We can't do our duty without this three-fold approval. That man is rich who has an approving conscience. He is harassed, if he knows he has neglected his work, or only partially performed it. We all know that the consciousness of duty done is a refreshment to the mind and a solace to the soul. Who has not retired at night with peaceful mind and heart aglow after a day spent in active and loving service? Somehow, the world seems brighter, opportunities fuller of meaning, and life radiant with promise to the person who has met and performed with devotion, the duties of the day. Heaven comes down the soul to greet, and music with no discordant note, charms the inmost recesses of the sensitive soul.

Then too, the good workman has the approval of those fellow men whose verdict is worth recording. By some, motives are always questioned and actions misinterpreted, but there are always a goodly number who give full credit for our workmanship. I am persuaded that the best men and women have all the applause they can stand, and some, alas, have too much.

The Sabbath-school teacher is to measure her influence by the far-distances. Immediate response she may not

always have but after she is gone her faithful teachings will show in the lives of those, who were under her instruction. The real Christians with whom we associate approve every effort that is honest and earnest. The faithful officers of the church, the consecrated ministers in the pulpit have their reward. They are known, and even the casual observer can without hesitation enumerate the members of the church, who feel the pressure of obligation, and who earnestly endeavor to discharge their full duty. And not only so, the community, or city, regardless of church affiliations, pays merited and willing tribute to a life inspired by pure motive and dominated by divine impulse. Live your life well. "Many shall see it, and fear and trust in the Lord."

But the primary motive of a "good workman" is neither the approval of himself nor of his fellow men. Hear the text "Study to show thyself *approved unto God.*" O, for tongue touched and heart inspired to make real this glorious thought! "Approved unto God." To our master we stand or fall, and the quality of our workmanship is to determine the verdict of Him, "whose we are and whom we serve." "Every man's work shall be made manifest for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Shall it be "wood and hay and stubble" or shall it be "gold and silver and precious stones?" We are in the work for the God who created us and the Christ who redeemed us. Mark this, a good workman is considerate of the interests of his employer and for this reason his work should be well done. The clerk in your store is employed to do your work and is expected to execute your will. He is serviceable to you just in proportion as he carefully guards your interests. He deserves and receives your disapprobation when he willfully

neglects, or partially performs the duties assigned to him. He is culpable when he proves himself unfaithful. His obligation to his employer is primal and paramount. He is a good workman if he realizes his obligations and faithfully performs his duties. Now if this principle is correct and applauded in these relations that pertain to temporal affairs how imperative in matters of spiritual importance. Many Christians do not seem to have this high and commendable sense of duty. They do not realize that they have voluntarily enlisted in the Lord's work and that they are preeminently responsible to Him. Such, however, is the stupendous fact. People sometimes make excuses, or render apologies to the minister for non-attendance on the services of the sanctuary and for neglect of church vows and Christian duties. "Study to show thyself approved *unto God.*" To Him you are responsible. "Every man shall give account of *Himself to God.*" "We must *all* appear before the judgment seat of *Christ.*" The neglect of your work or the careless performance of it is disloyal, not so much to yourself, or to the pastor, or to the church, but to your God and to your Saviour. When the preacher urges upon you the claims of the "Gospel" your obligations to attend the ordinances of God's house, to give to the causes of the church, and to make supreme in your thought and effort these spiritual realities, he is pleading for such a performance of duty on your part, as you will wish you had given in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and the Master's own verdict shall be declared. The awful thought is God's disapproval, the glorious thought is God's approval. You can put upon the preacher your condemnation here, if you choose, but he does not want to have it to bear when he stands before the Judge of all the earth. These considerations should make us earnest, thoughtful, persis-

tent, courageous. We have but one life to live, never another. After this is the unerring judgment of God. If I should be hastened into His presence now, would He say "Well done."

IV. COMPENSATION. There is always compensation for the good workman. The thoughtful clerk becomes the impressive proprietor, the earnest student becomes the efficient teacher. The skillful soldier becomes the gallant commander. Fidelity to trust means promotion to a position of conspicuous endeavor. Our text suggests compensation in this language. *"A workman that needeth not to be ashamed."* The negative way of putting it emphasizes its positive value. "A workman that needeth not to be ashamed"—a workman that is warranted in taking a pardonable pride in his achievements. "A workman that has no cause for regret, of whom the Son of Man will not be ashamed when He comes to reckon with His servants." There is compensation sure and satisfactory to the Christian workman because he is engaged in a work that is worth doing. The value of work is measured by its purpose and its permanency. This work is for the salvation of souls and the glory of God and the eternal years will be freighted with the results. "The builder builds for a century; we for eternity. The painter paints for a generation; we forever. The statuary cuts out the marble that soon perishes. Let us try to cut out the likeness of Christ to endure forever and ever. One hundred thousand men were employed in Egypt to construct a pyramidal tomb for a dead king; let us feel that we are engaged in a far nobler work in constructing temples for the living God. In my humble judgment the poorest parish school in our land, with no other ornament than the dew drops of the morning to gild it and the sun to shine upon it, is a nobler spectacle than the loftiest

European Cathedral with its spires glistening in the setting and rising suns of a thousand years."

Application, discrimination, approbation, compensation. These distinguish a good workman. The time will come when we shall review our work, "The Lord rejoices in His works." What a wonderful sentence that is! That man must have been inspired when he said, "That God rested from His labors and looked upon His works and pronounced them good." "Of all joys, that is the grandest and sublimest to review one's own work and pronounce it good." "There is no passage in English more beautiful than that which describes the author of that great work—'Falling Rome'—(Gibbon). When he had just come to the conclusion of his task, working there under the trees of Lausanne, he like a true artist, drew back and admired his finished work." And he was right for there are times when a man may look upon his work and say, 'That is genius.' When Swift was beginning to dote, he took down from a shelf one of his own works and exclaimed, 'What a genius I must have been when I did that.' We shall look back upon our work, the work the Lord has enabled us to do. Shall we say, 'I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do?' We serve a risen living Lord." " 'Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.' "

XII

"FISHERS *of* MEN"

The Essentials of Success

"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."—MATT. 4:19.

THE elements of success are found in a vital union with Christ and in loyalty to the methods employed by Him. "I will make you fishers of men." "Fishers of men" are made, not born. This is an important truth. We are not equipped by nature, but prepared by grace. This consideration makes success not merely a possibility for all, but a certainty for all. Such an attainment becomes not only an obligation but a privilege.

We speak of persons being qualified for their work. To be a successful merchant a man must have the qualifications of a merchant. The same is true of the lawyer, the physician, the statesman. So a man in order to win souls must have the qualifications of a soul-winner.

Let us note the letters in the name of Christ and see if they do not furnish us with the prerequisites necessary to successful "fishers of men."

I. CONSTANCY. How constant was Christ! The disciples on one occasion were busy in seeking a reason for the condition of the man born blind. Christ wasted no time in this discussion, but, impressed with the real need of the man, He said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day—the night cometh when no man can work." He immediately proceeded to a practical demonstration of this truth, by giving sight to the blind man. He was "instant in season and out of season." "He must needs go

through Samaria." He was now here and now there, going about doing good. The word of God gives us a graphic insight into the urgent life He lived and the constancy with which his work was done. He had no time for idleness. One sufferer after another He healed, one duty after another he performed, one soul after another He won. To the very last He went forth, and when no longer His hands could be used in loving benediction and His feet run on errands of mercy, because they were nailed to the cross, His great, loving heart went forth to the penitent thief, and to the multitude that clamored for His crucifixion—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

He says to you and to me, "Follow me." Be constant. As He spoke to His early disciples, so He addresses us. "Arise ye and depart, this is not your rest." Don't wait for opportunities. Make them. The fish will not be caught by waiting for them to come to you. You must go where they are, and stay where they are, and let down the net where they are.

II. Heart. The fathomless heart of Jesus Christ. It suggests love, interest, sympathy. He saw the multitude, and because He saw them He had compassion on them. They appeared to Him as sheep without a shepherd. He not only had a keen eye for the sinner, but His great heart responded to the need of the soul. The man who cares nothing for fishing finds neither pleasure nor profit in the employment. But the one who has an interest in the exercise has the first and an essential prerequisite to success. He will soon discover where the fish are. He will make himself familiar with their habits. The heart he has for the sport will open to him places and means for gratifying indulgence. So the fisher of men—the winner of souls—must have a heart that responds to the need of the soul.

Not until he has, will he go forth to catch men. This heart for the work will lead to a studied familiarity with the various conditions and habits of men.

We cannot see men as they are until we have an eye and a heart like the Master. The heart of love and sympathy will lead to the vision, and the vision will awaken compassion, and compassion will constrain to personal effort. The word heart also suggests that conditions are promising. We go forth with encouraging prospects. There is no need for being disheartened. The harvest is plenteous and it is acceptable.

III. RIGHTEOUSNESS. Our success is largely determined by the life we live. Christ must have had beaming in His countenance a radiance that reflected the soul within. He lived what He taught. His enemies could find no fault in Him. He, himself, was an eloquent and impressive commendation of the principles He sought to inculcate in other lives. Consistent living is the unanswerable argument to men for their acceptance of the Christ we offer for their appropriation.

Unless righteousness be the characteristic of your life, you cannot be effective in winning souls. You can have no constraining motive to this heavenly accomplishment. Worldly conformity and indulgence in questionable pleasures, make infirm, if not impossible an influence effective in soul-winning. What is not serviceable and supreme to you, you are not apt to commend as serviceable and supreme to others, and if you do, your testimony will be thrown out of court. God will make a soul that is really won to Christ attractive and irresistible to those who are inquiring the way of life. When God's child is practising His presence, there is *light* in his life. "Many shall see it." There is

power in his life "and fear." There is *influence* in his life, "and shall trust in the Lord."

IV. Individual Effort. One reason why the early church made such rapid progress was due to the witness borne by individuals. Those early disciples talked of Christ. He was the one all-absorbing subject of their conversation.

If such were the case today—do you doubt it? I don't—souls would be constantly gathered into the net. The earnest question for every soul is, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

This duty is incumbent not only upon the preacher and officers, but upon every professing Christian. All have influence. One fisherman catches fish near where another gets nothing.

The minister has by no means discharged his duty when he has preached the Gospel from the pulpit. His duty and privilege is to seek the winning of souls by personal conversation. The Sabbath-school teacher has done but a small part of duty when he or she has faithfully taught the lesson to the class collectively. Personal and persistent application of the truth is the demand of the urgent situation. Christ and Nicodemus—just the two—Christ and the woman at the well—just the two.

Mr. Moody tells of a discouraged Sabbath-school teacher in Chicago. He had not led any of his class of ten girls to Christ. Mr. Moody suggested that he go and talk to them personally. This he did, and at the end of ten days he said to Mr. Moody: "The last one of my class has yielded herself to Christ." Individual effort—face-to-face conversation. Sabbath-school teacher, Christian worker, try it. "He brought him to Jesus." If this could be said of every church member, what a gathering there would be.

V. SKILL. The fisherman, taught by experience, adopts the most probable means of success. In catching men spiritual adroitness is allowable. This, I think, is what Paul meant when he said: "I am all things to all men." He met men where they lived. He sought to view Christianity through their own eyes. He put himself in their place. He appropriated to himself their difficulties. Necessary to catching men is acquaintance with their surroundings, knowledge of their training—discernment of their peculiarities. Not all fish can be caught with the same bait. Not all men can be won in the same way, or by the same person. This is the wisdom of dealing with men as individuals. This the call to Sabbath-school teachers to know by habits and disposition each member of the class.

A notable example of this skill is afforded in the dealing of the Saviour with the woman at the well. He declared to her the specific sin of her life and thereby awakened her sense of guilt and aroused her to the necessity of repentance. He not only revealed Himself to Zacchaeus, but He revealed Zacchaeus to himself.

VI. TRUST. Trust in God, trust in Christ, trust in the means God has promised to own and bless. The disciples trusted in Christ and Christ trusted in God. Christ kept in mind this inspiring truth: "The Father which sent me." We must rely upon God for His blessing. This we may do with joyful confidence. When Philip went to the Ethiopian he was prompted by the Spirit, guided by the Spirit and withdrawn by the Spirit.

The fisherman may toil all night and take nothing. Though discouraged by past failures, like the disciples of old, when Christ commands, we must respond. "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net."

Remember what is involved in our faithfulness—the preciousness of souls, the glory of God, our own eternal reward.

O, that Christians would realize the duty and privilege of fishing for men—of winning souls! Why are we here in this world? For what does the church stand? For three things: the edification of believers, the salvation of sinners, and the glory of God. These may be reduced to one. The salvation of sinners. Christians are edified that they may be prepared to win souls, and the glory of God is gotten in the salvation of sinners.

The preaching services, the young people's meeting, the Sabbath-school, the prayer meeting, the missionary meetings, are for what? That souls may be won.

Every sermon preached, every sermon heard, every Sabbath-school lesson taught and learned, every service in which we engage, should be so directed as to catch men.

In the judgment of Christ men are of supreme value. The heart of God is set upon man. The Bible, God's revelation, is for the instruction, guidance and welfare of man. Apart from this paramount consideration it is positively and absolutely inexplicable. With this thought in mind, it becomes an intelligible and inspiring storehouse of treasures. The mission of Christ was for the salvation of men. To secure this end God has exhausted the resources of His wisdom and grace. The value and dignity of men are only conceived in the light of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and intercession of Christ. God has honored and dignified man by giving him the privilege of using ordained means for the salvation of his fellows.

May God give us the desire for souls. Let us concentrate our efforts upon the young—those in the Sabbath-school. They are easier to catch now than they will be later, even if they live. It is difficult to catch an old fish; difficult to hold

him after he is caught, and difficult to use him after he is held. Some one has said in substance if you win a child, you not only save a soul, but secure a life of service. The sermon, the music, the praying, the learning, should have this one thing in view—the winning of souls. Are souls being saved? Nothing can compensate for this lack. Our resources are infinite and exhaustless. Our opportunities are urgent and manifold. Whatever else we may or may not do, if we do not win souls, we make as a church and as individuals, a stupendous, ignominious, irretrievable failure. "He that winneth souls is wise." "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever." "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

XIII

The MINISTRY *of* ONESIPHORUS

A Christmas Meditation

"He oft refreshed me."—II. Tim. 1:16.

The record of some great lives is brief, but their service is immortal.

Noble ministry demands recognition, and an appreciative soul gladly gives "Honor to whom honor is due."

The biography of some men abounds in glittering generalities, and we sometimes suspect that the writer sacrifices truth in an effort to portray a monopoly of virtues.

The statement of a fact is frequently the soul of eloquence and it is always true that "actions speak louder than words."

Little is said of some of the grandest characters in sacred writ, but in these brief records, we find the secret of a great soul.

The life of Enoch in a single sentence is "suggestive of endless chapters of duty gloriously done." "Enoch walked with God, and he was not for God took him." Companionship with God here, and hereafter "in His presence where there is fullness of joy." Such a record is enough to make the simplest name immortal.

Look at Andrew. He heard John speak. "He first findeth his own brother, Simon, and he brought him to Jesus" —That's all, but that meant a great deal to the early church, and that act is potent throughout Christendom today. "Jesus beheld him," and virtually said, I can build on you. Have you done as much for Christ as the brief record of Andrew's life discloses?

Second Tim. 1:16-18, gives us all we know of Onesiphorus, but it is sufficient to inspire us to make of our lives a true success, and to attain at last coronation in heaven.

This man made sympathetic visits to Paul in his hour of need, and his memory was precious to the great Apostle.

What was the secret of his greatness? He was a help-bringer. His name means that, and he was true to his name. The Psalmist says: "The Lord is my helper." A beautiful name,—more beautiful, he practically translated it.

Paul is in a sad plight. He is suffering all the horrors of prison life in a Roman dungeon. Under these circumstances of cruel persecution and dire need, Onesiphorus manages to reach him. Just how, I don't know, but "where there is a will there is a way." I don't know just how Jesus Christ reached you and me, but He came. He sought until He found. No other ever had greater difficulties in his search for the recovery of that which was lost, but He stayed not until the objects of His sympathy were made sensible of His presence.

Character is great in proportion to its Christliness. Onesiphorus had certainly caught the spirit of the Master. He was a ministering spirit sent forth to minister to one who was an heir of salvation.

The need for ministry is always urgent and imperative. The call for help comes from every side. Human need is a perpetual challenge. We are responsible to God for our failure to relieve it, and thousands would be just as grateful for our ministry as Paul was to Onesiphorus.

God's lowly ones are suffering in body and soul, and they look out from their prisons, as did Paul, with unspeakable longings for the coming of one, who brings substantial aid.

It's a sad commentary on our professed loyalty to Christ, that so much need ofttimes finds such meager response from those who are the heirs of Christ's purchased and ample inheritance. Get this truth: there is a supply for every need. Wherever there is need, some one is withholding a supply. Who is to be pitied more, the man who is in need, or the man who has the supply and withholds what ought to be used to relieve the necessity? God stands ready to supply the need of His children, but He expects to do it through your instrumentality.

We need a constant repetition of that spirit, which animated the disciples of Christ when the Spirit of God came upon them, "And all that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need." No wonder that they "ate their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people," and no wonder that "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

The Pentecostal spirit precedes the Pentecostal blessing. Selfishness can never be rewarded. The spirit of brotherhood needs emphasis and we must realize that we are our brother's keeper. We are so apt to give to those who already have. The glory of Christ was that He gave to those, whom others despised and neglected. They wanted to make Him king for their glory. He desired to be crowned for reasons they couldn't understand. By this standard they measured themselves, but not the measureless Christ. He defied their standards and proved himself big enough for the world, and entirely too broad for their narrow conceptions.

Are we not prone to their folly? Do we not seek to appropriate Christ for ourselves instead of receiving what He offers, for distribution to others? Does not the rich man command more favors than the poor man? As a rule, the more titles a man has, the more favors he can secure.

The man in need doesn't always get the best place in the church. Isn't the chief place too frequently given to those whose qualifications are identical with those to whom Christ said, "You love the chief places in the synagogue?"

Let us catch the true spirit of the Christmas season, and go out of our little circle, and distribute to those who have need. Let us encourage and comfort them, and bring into their darkened lives the light that falls with heavenly benediction.

Some characteristics of the ministry of Onesiphorus are exceedingly suggestive.

I. IT WAS PERSONAL AND SYMPATHETIC

Paul: "He was not ashamed of my chains."

His visit to Paul was dangerous and unpopular. It is more noble and more helpful to render personal service than to send some one else, either with or without our sympathy or our gifts.

It took courage to undertake this errand of mercy. Paul wrote: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present evil world and is departed into Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me, I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."

How few there are who stand by even the noble and the true in their day of adversity! The seasons of trial are coming to all. They came to the heroic apostle. They came to the Son of God. How similar their experiences!

Paul's trusted friends forsook him, and the pathetic Scripture of the Master's experience when He was bearing the burden of His relentless foes.

Those whom He had taught and for whom He had suffered, in the hour of His supreme and eloquent agony, forsook Him and fled.

When you were prosperous, friends were plentiful; they sought your counsel; they took your advice. The day of adversity came; those you had helped "passed by on the other side."

Onesiphorus was a good Samaritan. He was not "ashamed of the Apostle's chain." Paul was never grander than when, for the cause dear to his Master's heart, he was willing to suffer in the Roman dungeon, but his unworthy foes and his cowardly friends left him severely alone.

Reputation is the basis of man's judgment. Character is the basis of God's estimate.

All honor to the one man, who, in the face of danger, loved his friend, and was opportune in his ministry.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed."

Give me the man who stands to his friend in the dark and trying hour. Commend to me the woman who will stem the tide of popular opinion in order to render the assistance which the less favored of earth ought to have.

The storm stresses and proves the strength of the oak. Real character is determined in the same way. See that your ministry is personal and sympathetic.

II. IT WAS EARNEST AND SACRIFICIAL

Paul says: "But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me." He may have been a busi-

ness man with a sensitive conscience. Paul was in prison. He would find him. Would you do good if you had the opportunity? Maybe so. But it is your duty to discover opportunity. Opportunities are almost as numberless as the sands of the seashore. There is hardly a home in which there is not a standing case of need. Opportunities come to those who seek to make them. The Saviour came to seek and save the lost, and it was not long until the sick, the suffering, the sorrowing, the lost, were seeking Him. We sit and wait for many to come to us and they can't come.

They are like that palsied man—they want to get under the blessed influence of the Great Healer, but they are unable. In the presence of that tremendous throng, his kind friends make an opportunity. They let him down through the roof. The Saviour commends their faith, effects a complete cure and dismisses the case. Jesus went about doing good. We must go into the highways and hedges before we can compel them to come in.

Alas! We have so few like Onesiphorus. A great man in need of ministry was more important to him than the few dollars he might have saved by sacrificing his conscience.

If we make a reputation for usefulness, the needy will appeal to us.

I have heard that a great physician made, in substance, this statement: When I was a young man I had to seek my patients, but it wasn't long until they were seeking me. I had a friend in the Seminary who seemed to have in great measure the spirit of Paul's friend. Much of his time was spent in seeking to encourage his fellow students. He went from room to room, speaking a well-directed word of cheer. He died before he graduated, but I believe he received his diploma, "Well done," from the Great Teacher. The

fragrance of that life cannot be forgotten by those with whom he was such a helpful associate.

Unless you put yourself out to give help, your ministry is hardly worthy of mention.

Sacrifice is essential to the highest and most permanent usefulness.

Seek, like Onesiphorus and Christ, and you will find.

III. It Was Habitual and Persistent

Paul says: "He oft refreshed me." One visit, though dangerous, was not enough. Sympathy bears repetition. Kindness wisely administered can never be superfluous. So long as we are in the world help is needed and ought to be supplied. The hand, and head and heart of Christ went out to the very last.

He was always going forth, and even when His hands and feet were nailed to the cross and He could no longer use them, His great heart went forth to the penitent thief and to the multitude that clamored for His crucifixion, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

IV. It Was Gracious and Effective

"He oft refreshed me." "He revived me."

There in that prison with its stifling atmosphere, lay one of the world's greatest heroes. He needed ministry, and this man, as an Angel of Mercy, was used to revive the drooping spirit of the aged saint. The world not only needs willing ministry, but those who are able to impart what they have in mind and feel in heart.

We need to pray to God for sanctified common-sense. Some people are bunglers; they only discourage even when

their motives are pure, and their hearts are genuinely sympathetic.

They lack tact. They measure the condition of others from their own standpoint. They don't look through the eyes of the needy and the sufferings of the oppressed. They need constant fellowship with the Master that they may be touched with the feeling of man's infirmities. We can't get at the secret of blessing to others until we pray ourselves into their environment.

You can't lift a man up by keeping him down. Don't discourage him by telling him he is as mean and poor as he can be. He probably knows that too well already. Tell him that there are within him divine possibilities, and that he may be lifted from his present condition.

The Saviour didn't begin to call His disciples by telling them of their humble walk in life.

He simply said: "Follow Me," and obedience to that command necessarily lifted them into a higher sphere. He didn't argue with those disciples, who sought to secure the condemnation of the woman, who was taken in sin. He brought gladness to her life by challenging them with those memorable words, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." He always encouraged the needy to believe that they had the opportunity of rising above their condition. He strengthened the heart and faith of John in that lonely prison by sending him word that the works He was doing ought to convince him that He was the real Christ, to whom John, in his brighter days, had borne such faithful witness.

Suffering humanity needs help more than criticism, and is ready to receive it.

The remedy for all misdirected kindness is preparation for this heavenly ministry.

We must ask "wisdom of God, who gives to all men liberally and upbraideth not."

We must know from study of Christ's life and from communion with Him, just how He dealt with the suffering. We must ask him to direct us in the execution of the noble purposes we have formed. He alone can make our ministry gracious and effective.

This ministry of Onesiphorus, personal and sympathetic, earnest and sacrificial, habitual and persistent, gracious and effective, was really ministry to the Lord Himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these my brethren, even the least, ye have done it unto me."

All that we do for others here, in the name of Christ, is remembered up yonder.

"A cup of cold water shall not lose its reward." We minister unto Christ when in His name we minister unto His brethren.

Onesiphorus received for his visits to the apostle the earnest benediction of the aged saint. The prayer of Paul was sufficient remuneration for his ministry. Hear the apostle's prayer: "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus." "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day."

'Tis sweet to know that God's choice spirits are praying His blessings on us and ours.

We may have a share in these prayers if we are true to our mission as ministering spirits.

And your ministry? Your crowning blessing is your blessing to others. To be a blessing is a blessing indeed.

You may enter the homes and hearts of those who need your ministry. It may cost you something, but it will profit you more. Follow the example of this noble man Onesiphorus.

We are approaching the Christmas season. We can observe its spirit and translate its significance in no better way than to encourage and help those who are in need.

Our Christmas gift is Christ—God's "unspeakable gift." If we give ourselves to Christ, to those who are in their sorrows, their prisons, their need, Christ will go with the gift and the happy season will demonstrate to us as ministry did to Paul's friend. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

XIV

"ABRAM *the* HEBREW"

"Abram the Hebrew."—GEN. 14:13.

"WHAT'S in a name?" The Bible attaches much importance to names. They have a singular, suggestive meaning. They contain an historic epitome of individual life. Names are associated with character and achievement. A name becomes inseparable from the qualities of the person who bears it. Abraham means what he really was—"The father of a great multitude." "Abram the Hebrew." The name Hebrew is gloriously associated with God's chosen people. The name Hebrew literally means a passenger—a stranger. To foreigners it referred to—"Those who live on the other side."

"Abram the Hebrew," or Abram the stranger. Abram the man whose character and conduct were strange and peculiar to those who were not acquainted with his God. Unbelievers knew him not. They discerned in his qualities, the result of a knowledge they did not possess. The motives and inspiration of his singular and impressive life they were not able to fathom. His descendants by spiritual regeneration have ever been strangers—"a peculiar people." Peculiar because of no ordinary generation. Strangers because living a different life—strangers because worshiping the true God—strangers because this world is not their home. "Strangers and pilgrims on the earth." A great tribute to the character and conduct of Abram, this appellation—"Abram the Hebrew." A glowing tribute to you and me from the "aliens of the commonwealth of Israel" when you and I are designated the Christian. Abram remained

a stranger. The persistent qualities and conditions of his life kept him true to this discriminating title conferred by those with whom we now dwelt. Are we known as strangers? Does the idolatrous world see in us followers of the true God? Do men take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus? I can hear the dwellers in Canaan say as they looked upon this man, that is Abram the Hebrew—Abram the stranger. Are we thus spoken of—that is so and so, the Christian?

"Abram the Hebrew." Biography is an interesting and instructive study. "Example is better than precept." Someone says, "God teaches more by example than by argument. Men are moved more by personality than by abstract principle. The principles of religion are presented to us in the Bible, in examples of many men and women." The life of Christ is the conclusive argument in favor of the divinity and truthfulness of His teaching. Hence to preach Him is the sum total of a Christian's obligation. "Living epistles are known and read of all men." God gives "line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." But the conclusion of the whole matter—God's eloquent, impressive, and convincing peroration to His matchless and comprehensive address—the Bible—is the declaration and manifestation of its sublime principles in the perfect life of Jesus Christ.

Men are convinced and edified as they note the translation of these precepts into inspiring examples of their desirableness and efficiency. Abram the Hebrew is one of these notable immortals. His successors are a "great multitude that no man can number"—the observers and practitioners of the principles by which he was controlled. Then to have Abram's blessing we must have Abram's characteristics.

I. "He Changed His Residence"

He moved out of his country. He never could have been what he became if he had stayed where he was. His native environment would have been his permanent limitation. His opportunities there would have been as meager as those of his ancestors. He would have remained "a prophet without honor in his own country." The place where God found him is typical of the place where he finds us by nature. With us as with Abram our only opportunity of progress and preferment is beyond our own confines. This is true of the physical life. The weak and helpless child moves out into strong and robust maturity. The mental faculties develop as they make new discoveries and appropriate new materials. Spiritual expansion is necessary to spiritual enjoyment. This was true in the apostle Paul's wonderful development. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Mission interprets and magnifies life. The heart of God moved out in the person and mission of His Son. The Son Himself left his own abode and came to this world on a mission fraught with universal and eternal possibility and responsibility.

By nature we are all in a country that not only limits, but makes impossible a safe and satisfactory life. Like those lepers of sacred writ, to stay where we are, means stagnation and death. Our peril lies in our surroundings. The paramount issue is where I am. Abram might have argued in this condition I was born and in this condition I will remain. The conclusion of that argument would have been uselessness and destruction. He had to change his residence. So with you my natural and unconverted friend.

The change must be made. The requirement is absolute and imperative. Into the purpose of God is the laudable ambition of every worthy life. If Abram had remained where he was, he might have attained certain ends, but the vast expanse of God's glory, he could not have entered and enjoyed.

The sphere in which Christ reigns, is across the border. Over the line we are compelled to go. The broader and grander purpose of God is only entered by those who leave their own surroundings and become subject to God's plans and purposes. Honesty, integrity, morality, you may attain in the sphere in which you were born. But the smile of God's approval, expansion of the soul, spiritual realities, immortality and eternal life—things essential—are in the land that God shows us. Abram in and of himself was incapable of making this change. So are you. The Lord called Abram. The Lord has called you. Obedient response to God's voice settled him for time and eternity. Such is the issue in your life. Will you stay where you are or will you change your residence? It is interesting to note that Abram, at this period, was a young man. Just at that time when the momentous question of allegiance urges speedy and righteous settlement. "Abram heard in his soul those two voices which every young man hears, the voice of the world and the voice of God, of pleasure and of duty, of the flesh and of the conscience. It is the most serious conflict through which we shall ever pass. He began his career by putting himself right with God. He deliberately chose and entered upon a religious life. All right-thinking persons approve his choice. And you? You stand in the same circumstances. His youth is repeated in yours. You face the same alternatives: the same voices are calling you both ways. God's voice is not unheard by you. In some

way easily recognized, he is calling you to a Christian life. That voice is just as divine and just as miraculous as this one of the text. What are you to do about it? This man obeyed, and you? You hesitate. Why?"

II. "Simplicity and Openness of Worship"

"Abram built an altar unto the Lord between Bethel and Ai. Bethel means the house of God and Ai the city of destruction. Every true man stands just there. His first halt was Shechem. There he built an altar. Then at Bethel, Hebron and Beersheba—always a tent and an altar." "One can follow the march of Alexander the Great by the ruins of the military camps he built. One can follow Abram's journey by the altars he built."

The significance of this altar. It was the simplest form of worship and God's ordained means of access to himself. Abram's own spiritual life would receive constant incentive as he worshipped at this altar. But this altar was also the place of testimony. The first step in the career of this remarkable man was his choice of God—the second step was a deliberate determination to be known as a Christian. Do you say a man's faith is something between himself and God alone—what necessity for an outward altar? Abram might have chosen to worship God exclusively in secret, but evidently he deemed public avowal of his faith necessary. Here is a strong argument for membership in the church. Not only are we to choose God, but we are to avow that choice.

What was the chief reason for this altar? "The Canaanite was then in the land." "He was steeped in basest idolatry. Abraham's sojourn there in Canaan is typical of a Christian's life, example, opportunity and influence in the world. Abram owed to God that altar in the sight of men. What he had of knowledge, of peace, of character, of light,

of hope better and brighter than these people, since he had obtained them because of the mercy and grace of God, as an honorable man it was his duty to say so. How can you enjoy the blessings of God, and then refuse to let men know the source from which they come? This the binding obligation upon the Christian—we owe the Gospel of grace to the ignorant and idolatrous of earth. Have I no gratitude to God for the superior light in which I walk?" Verily, as Christ did, I am to declare God.

"Abram owed that altar to the community where he lived." "No man liveth unto himself." Every man is a radiator of influence. Human sympathy impels declaration to the hopeless Canaanites the source of our spiritual advantages. "The Arab crossing the desert no sooner wets his own lip than he calls to his thirsty companions, come. How inhuman for Abraham not to have placed that altar where all could have seen the smoke of its sacrifice? Is your religion honest and outspoken, or is it hidden and expressionless? Do you claim that your home is Christian? What evidence do you offer to the world—what visible token makes a distinction between your home and that of your unchristian neighbor? How can you fail for your own sake, for God's honor and for a testimony to the Canaanite everywhere about you to set up an altar in your home from which the incense of prayer shall go up daily unto God."

III. "SPIRIT OF MAGNANIMITY"

Abraham met Melchisedec, the priest of the Most High God, and to him he offered the tithe. It is interesting in this connection to note that the tithe ante-dated the Mosaic Law. This would argue that the grace of God in Abram's soul, grace which is over and above and beyond law, made him recognize his financial obligation to God. This thought

of magnanimity is a broad subject for elaboration. It is opposed to one of the greatest of all sins, expressed in one word, selfishness. Selfishness is the destruction of man's true self. It is the perversion of the true mission of every life—helpfulness to others. It is antagonistic to the spirit of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. No person can be truly great, or useful, who is not magnanimous. But the tithe suggests the specific obligation in money that we owe to the Lord. One of the greatest problems that confronts every man is what to do with what he has. Not how to get what you haven't, but how to distribute what you have. Andrew Carnegie gave utterance to a profound truth when he said, in substance, that the problem of the distribution of wealth was more serious than the problem of accumulation.

America boasts of being the richest nation in the world. Herein lies her peril. The question that confronts commercial America is the added and awful obligation that her vast material wealth and resources impose. She must either sow to the flesh, or to the spirit. To sow to the flesh means governmental corruption. To sow to the spirit means life everlasting. "We need to make friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness that we may be received into everlasting habitations." That is, the money of the world needs to be turned into channels that conduce to Christian character and benevolence. Money is necessary to the spread of the gospel. Money is necessary to educate young men to preach the gospel; it is necessary to support them after they are prepared to preach; it is necessary to print the literature that is distributed as an hand-maid of the preached word. Money is necessary in the building of churches. God knew this, hence the matter of liberal, proportionate, cheerful giving is stressed in the inspired Bible. Money is power in the kingdom of God. Money is power. The serious ques-

tion is where to loose that power. How meager what we give to God in comparison with what we spend for ourselves!

The church of God needs awakening on this subject. The rivalry among Christian people in the effort to make themselves comfortable in a temporal way needs to be changed into a wholesome Christian rivalry in the effort to see how little they can spend on themselves and how much they can give to God's cause. Is it not strange that such is not the case? The first man who was electrocuted in this country was a man by the name of Kemmler. This occurred in the prison at Auburn, N. Y. It was stated that the execution of the death penalty in his case cost the state of New York one hundred thousand dollars. In the city of New York, a young man who might have gone the way of Kemmler, because he had a pistol in his pocket with which to kill an enemy, heard a street missionary preach the gospel and was saved, and he himself became a missionary. The cost of converting that man was not more than five dollars, but it meant the salvation of his soul, and probably others through his instrumentality. We owe at least a tenth to our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jacob gave that. Are we not to do as much under grace as the Jew required to do under law? A minister met a consecrated woman in New York and asked her about this matter of money. She said, "I used to give one-tenth, but I have gone beyond that; and now I ask the Lord for every dollar that I have, Lord, what shall I do with that dollar?" We ought to give all that God calls for. The amount we give may be little, and yet liberal. The amount may be large and yet sparing. We need to realize honestly and truly that "It is more blessed to give than to receive"—that it is sweeter to say, Lord here it is, than to say, I will hold it.

Magnanimity. A Presbyterian elder made this remark, "I am the Lord's by His choice and by my choice. I hold a good position and make a good salary. The Lord gave it to me and gives me health and ability to hold it. Therefore, I want to give Him all I can of it and spend as little for self as I can get along with." If all Christians had this idea, which I believe is the true one, the suffering for finances of the cause of Christ would largely cease and there would be more happy Christians.

IV. "Man of Prayer"

The record of Abram's prayer for Lot is an inspiration to this commendable exercise. His love for Lot prompted him to earnest prayer for his escape from the ruins of Sodom. How prominently revealed in this petition the essential features of true prayer: confidence in God, boldness, importunity, fervor, perseverance. The shining examples of Christian character the Bible furnishes were men of prayer. Abraham, David, Daniel, Stephen, Paul, Jesus Christ. "Prayer is the Christian's vital breath." To be a live Christian without prayer is just as impossible as to be a live man without lungs. A poor man once went to a pious minister and said, "Mr. Carter, what will become of me? I work hard and fare hard, and yet I cannot thrive." Mr. Carter answered, "Still you want one thing; I will tell you what you shall do. Work hard and fare hard and pray hard, and I will warrant you shall thrive."

V. "Man of Sacrifice"

The severe test to which God put Abraham in calling him to sacrifice Isaac is familiar to us all. His boy was spared, but to all intents and purposes the sacrifice was

made. An inseparable accompaniment of Christianity is sacrifice—suffering. This urgent principle found its supreme expression in the tragedy of Calvary. Everything worth having costs something. Before we can gain the victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, we must sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. Failure to count the cost means meager enjoyment of what comes into our possession. Frequently the thing dearest to us is the thing for which God calls, because that thing is more apt to divide our affections. Abraham was called to sacrifice Isaac. Paul was called to suffer the loss of all things. The very ones on whom Christ depended in the hour of His supreme and eloquent agony forsook Him and fled. There is nothing that enters into my life to which God has not a supreme right, and I may reasonably expect Him to demand what is dearest to me. God himself sacrificed the best He had—even His only Son. Paul breathes the true spirit of the Christian when he says, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." To obtain the "Pearl of Great Price" it is necessary for a man to sell all that he has. "Whosoever does not deny himself and take up his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." The glory of any life consists not so much in what it has accumulated as in what it has surrendered. The marks of the Lord Jesus constituted the essential glory of the great "Apostle to the Gentiles." God honors and rewards those who have really suffered for His cause. They are the ones of whom the world is not worthy. Not the soldier who escapes, but the one who suffers the wounds of battle secures enduring fame. John B. Gordon's facial scar marked him as a deserving hero. Your trials and sorrows may be worth more to you than your joys. "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the

house of feasting, for that is the end of all men and the living will lay it to his heart." "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." "These are they who have come up out of great tribulation." Christianity's Crown of Glory is the Cross of Sacrifice.

VI. "Man of Faith"

The foundation of Abraham's imposing personality was his faith in God. Faith is the polished cornerstone to the beautiful and enduring superstructure of Christian character. Faith in God enabled "Abraham to Hebrew" to change his residence in obedience to God's call. The New Testament tells us, "By faith Abraham went out not knowing whither he went," and because he did not know, he went to immortality. "By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac." "By faith he sojourned in a strange country. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform." Abraham demonstrated the genuineness of his faith by the grandeur of his works.

VII. "Man of Obedience"

This has been already indicated, Abraham obeyed God in moving out and in his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac. His life was one of loyal submission and faithful obedience. "When the great Italian sculptor, Canova, was about to begin his famous statue of Napoleon, his keen eye detected a tiny red line running through the upper part of the block of marble, which had been brought to him at great expense. Others could not see it, but he did and refused to lay hands upon it. No matter how rare and

costly the gifts are we bring to Christ, if He sees in our hearts the red line of disobedience He will not accept them. Obedience is the greatest gift we can offer to God, for it includes all we have, are, or hope to be. Then first of all, let us yield him obedience. Accept His will and give Him yours for thou knowest what God's will must be for all His creatures, so for thee, the best."

VIII. "HIS SECRET HOPE"

"He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "He confessed that he was a stranger and pilgrim on the earth." The vision of the true Christian is of brighter skies, greener fields and more abundant harvests. From the windows of the soul we see the delectable mountains. The ecstacies of the Seer on Patmos charm our enraptured spirits and respond to our glorified visions. "Like Abraham, we dwell in tents here. We have no continuing city and no abiding place. We seek one to come."

"This blessed hope revives
Our courage by the way,
While each in expectation lives
And longs to see the day.
"From sorrow, toil and pain,
And sin we shall be free,
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity."

"Men of the world have their portion in this life," but the children of God have the desire which clamors, "Evermore give us this bread."

What power, what joy, what comfort, what inspiration in this secret hope. God gave to Abraham in abundance here, and made repose in his bosom typical of the bliss of

the "Spirits of just men made perfect." For his magnanimous spirit to Lot, "The Lord said unto Abram, lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward—for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever." And the rest, "Then Abraham gave up the ghost and died in a good old age and full of years and was gathered to his people." "Gathered to his people." The life he lived, the spirit he manifested, the sacrifices he made, the service he rendered, the secret hope he cherished, all conspired to make him a logical and successful candidate for the kingdom of heaven. Since he entered myriad others have been "gathered to their people." "They shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south, and shall sit down with Abraham in the kingdom of God." Yes, "They are gathering home."

"Up to the bountiful giver of life,
Gathering home, gathering home—
Up where the Saviour's own face is the light,
God's children are gathering home."

"They're gathering home from every land, one by one, one by one,
As their weary feet touch the shining strand, yes, one by one,
They rest with the Saviour, they wait their crown,
Their travel-stained garments are all laid down—
They wait the white raiment, the Lord shall prepare,
For all who the glory with Him shall share."

Will you be there? Then change your residence here. Exhibit the characteristics of "Abram the Hebrew." Remember that character and glory are virtually synonymous terms in the vocabulary of Heaven. Character is likeness to Christ, and transformation into His image is permanent, personified, heavenly and eternal glory.

XV

STRENGTH TO GO

"I will go in the strength of the Lord God."—Ps. 71:16.

MOTION is the law of life. The explanation of creation in the first chapter of Genesis is given in this language: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Activity is a physical, mental and moral necessity. There is always something to do—something to attain.

The word "go" is immeasurably significant. Everything is on the go. The planets are on the march, moving ceaselessly with startling rapidity. As we stand on the shore and look out upon the great ocean, we are reminded of the Scripture, "The troubled sea that cannot be at rest."

The blood is in constant circulation. The heart beats seventy-two times per minute, and has not ceased since we saw the light of day. The mind is always active. How many thoughts cross its domain every twenty-four hours! And how time flies! "What power can stay him in his onward course. . . . On, still on, he presses, and forever."

Think how often the words *go, going, gone* are used. Not a day perhaps in which these words are not used by each one of us, and certainly not a day in which they are not suggested. We see a friend and ask where, when, why, how are you going? We are obliged to go. Men going on errands of business. Physicians going in response to calls for medical attention. Friends and relatives going to the house of sorrow and into the chamber of death. Ministers going to give to human hearts the consolations of the Gospel.

There are so many places to go and so many persons constantly going; some on missions of love; some on errands of revenge; some going to places of profit; some to places of loss. Many going without sober thought, many going with serious meditation. Each individual permitted in large measure to determine what course to pursue.

Men can go to ruin; many have done so; many are now on the way. Men can go to good success here, and to Heaven hereafter. Well may we consider the great issue involved in the word go. The Psalmist says, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God."

I. Strength to Go is Necessary

We can't go without strength. Strength is required to think; strength is required to speak; strength is required to walk; strength is required to run; strength is required to work. So much strength every day and every hour for the multiple activities of life.

Some go in their own strength. They boast of ability to do what is required of them. They rely very largely, if not exclusively, on their own resources. Some go in the strength of their ancestors, trusting in the name borne, or the achievement wrought by them, to convey them through life in a respectable and comfortable way. Some go in the strength of others. They live on the energy of others. They trust in the charity of others. They depend on the exertions of others. All have to go, and all must have strength for going. It is evident that the character of our going depends on the source of our strength. "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

David said, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." Here is a motto for every one on life's journey. Here is a

resolution that every individual should make, and this resolution he should renew every year, every month, every week, every day, every hour, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God."

The strength of the Lord God is needed.

It is needed because of *human frailty*. Hear David in this psalm: "Cast me not off in the time of old age, forsake me not when my strength faileth." We are not sufficient for these things.

"The flesh is weak." There are burdens too heavy for me to bear. There are problems too perplexing for me to solve; there is work too important for me to do; there are issues too momentous for me to settle. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." But "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way."

We need this strength because of *formidable enemies*.

David prays, "Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man." 'For mine enemies speak against me, and they that lay wait for my soul take counsel together." These enemies are real; they are alert; they are unscrupulous; they are persistent; they are strong; they contest every step of progress; they meet us at every turn of the way; they lie in wait to deceive. To overcome them, to triumph over them, we need "the strength of the Lord God."

II. THE STRENGTH IS OFFERED

"Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." "He giveth power to the faint and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." "My

grace is sufficient for thee." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The power of the omnipotent God is pledged to those who put their trust in Him. He cannot, He will not, leave His children to the enemies that attempt to destroy; to the devil, who goes about "seeking whom he may devour." Upon the generous promises of our Lord, made in the consciousness of His resurrection victory, we can rely in the midnight of human despair, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

III. This Strength is All-Sufficient

It is sufficient for testimony. David says, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God. I will make mention of Thy righteousness and Thy salvation all the day. My tongue also shall talk of Thy righteousness all the day long."

So said the timid disciples under fierce and threatening accusation, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."

You desire to bear testimony for Christ. You say you cannot. Are you sure? It may be your husband needs to hear you speak of your interest in his salvation, or your child, or your Sabbath-school scholar, or your friend. It may be that you are to speak the word that God waits to bless with saving power. You can't do it? Stop, consider, determine, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." Many words have been effectively spoken in the consciousness of this strength that could not have been spoken without it. Experience confirms the truth of this statement.

This strength is sufficient for guidance. Hear David: "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust, let me never be put to confusion." We may often be perplexed, but we need

not be in despair if we are trusting in "the strength of the Lord God."

This strength is sufficient for refuge. "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort." "Thou hast given commandment to save me, for thou art my rock and my fortress."

"Thou, the refuge of my soul
When the stormy billows roll,
I am safe when by Thy side,
I would in Thy love abide."

This strength is sufficient for deliverance. "Thou, which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. The righteous shall not be utterly cast down. The Lord upholdeth him with his hands; underneath are the everlasting arms."

This strength is sufficient for influence. "Thou shalt increase my greatness." In submission to God's will through the discipline that God administers, the influence of His child is greatly increased.

"Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." This increase of greatness is also a personal realization.

This strength is sufficient for comfort. "And comfort me on every side." "Thou knowest my downsittings and mine uprising. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. Thou hast beset me behind and before and laid thine hand upon me." From every point of the compass the comforts of God flow into the heart of the one who trusts Him.

The strength of the Lord God is sufficient for the manifold service He calls us to render—the duties of home, the

duties of State, the duties of Church. In this strength we may go physically, mentally, spiritually.

Resolve every day, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God" to my household duties, to my business interests, to my social obligations, to my personal work, to my church privileges, to my Christian responsibilities.

IV. This Strength is Secured by Prayer and Trust

"In the day when I cried, Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." "Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Trembling, powerless sinner, what word to you to persuade and encourage you to enter upon the Christian life? Do you say, "My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord?" Hear the Word of God through the prophet Isaiah: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me."

You cannot successfully contend with "your adversary, the devil." "But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, He taketh from him all his armor, wherein he trusted." This stronger one is Jesus Christ, who stands ready to fight your battles, and to win for you constant victories.

Day at a time, He will prove to you His promise and His power. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." "My strength is made perfect in weakness."

O, beloved, let us grasp the truth, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

Let each and all resolve: "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." Let us not forget that we are going to eternity. When are we going? Every moment exclaims, "Forward to the bar of God."

How are we going? In whose strength? We are going surely and rapidly. Let us go with high purpose and calm confidence. And when we go down into the "valley of the shadow," where the pathways of every one converge, let us say, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God," and we can say, "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me." Then an eternity of bliss with "the spirits of just men made perfect"—the radiant hosts of God—saved by His strong arm "to an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

"Be strong!
We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.
Shun not the struggle; face it, 'tis God's gift.

"Be strong!
Say not the days are evil—who's to blame?
And fold the hands and acquiesce—O shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.

"Be strong!
It matters not how deep intrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes, the day, how long.
Faint not, fight on! Tomorrow comes the song."

XVI

"BORDERLAND CHRISTIANS"

"Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in Thy sight, let this land be given unto Thy servants for a possession and bring us not over Jordan."—NUMBERS 32:5.

HISTORY abounds in thrilling incidents. We read of the march of legions of men in pursuit of the foe, or in anticipation of alluring possessions. Great armies have gone forward to victory or defeat, suffering hunger, enduring pain, contesting every step of progress. Perhaps in all history there is no more thrilling account of moving hosts than the biblical narrative of the march of Israel toward the promised land of Canaan. They met with varied experiences; they were sometimes rebellious; they were hungry, homesick, discouraged. They were the advance guard of those who come after them in the succeeding generations.

"Strangers and pilgrims on the earth desiring a better country." Some fell by the way and were never permitted to enter the land of Canaan. They were punished for their disobedience. Others were faithful unto the end and made an abundant entrance into that goodly land.

The various tribes were given their inheritance. Reuben and Gad, for reasons given by them, wanted to settle on the Jordan without crossing over into the promised land. They said, "Let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession and bring us not over Jordan."

This incident suggests the theme "Borderland Christians." I fear that there are many Christians who are typified by the tribes of Reuben and Gad. "They are seemingly content to live in the borderland of Christian experience, preferring the commonplace type of religious

life, strangely mixed with worldliness." Here they live and die, knowing that they are coming far short of God's glory, and yet persisting in their choice which prevents them from the beckoning spiritual privileges and enjoyments of a life "hid with Christ in God." Paul calls them "carnal Christians," and equally expressive is the title "Borderland Christians." "Like Reuben and Gad, they choose to dwell on the outskirts of privilege and power."

Now there are certain marks of "Borderland Christians." Some of us may recognize in ourselves one or more of these characteristics. We all know there are Christians and Christians. One mark of the "Borderland Christian" is:

I. "MORE INTEREST IN SECURING TEMPORAL THAN SPIRITUAL ADVANTAGES"

Worldly prosperity is a more alluring challenge than spiritual privilege. Reuben and Gad did not ask, "Where is the best place to bring up our families, but where is the best place for our cattle?" Their chief concern was along temporal lines.

Now let us be practical and endeavor to see just where we are. Let us be honest with ourselves, for Reuben and Gad are to be commended for giving plainly their reason for remaining on the border. They said, "Thy servants have cattle." They placed the emphasis on the material. What is the dominating desire of our hearts? We are agreed that it should be the glory of God, and an uncompromising loyalty to Jesus Christ. Is what ought to be; what really is?

Here are business men, God bless you, and prosper you. This is my desire, but I ask by what overmastering purpose are you impelled to strive for business success? Is it the love of money? Is it the power that money wields? Is it

the position that money secures? Is it that you may lay by for an old age of luxurious indolence? Your motive ought to be a different and higher one than any I have mentioned. The business talent God has given you should be as scrupulously used for His glory and the good of your fellowmen as the talent of beautiful thought, or forceful speech ought to be used by the minister of the Gospel. In this mighty sphere of business your opportunity for Christian service is boundless. Make your prayer to God that He will crown with success your business enterprises, so that you can use your accumulations for the spread of His truth, for the good of mankind. Wealth as an end in itself is a stupendous failure. One of the saddest commentaries on any life is to say, "He is a rich man only." One of the most beautiful commentaries on any life is to say, "He is 'rich toward God.'" This is a day of material intoxication. Many persons are alienating conscience, throttling affections and sacrificing character for temporal prosperity. Those who profess Christ must assert the supremacy of His teachings in the marts of trade. Don't put your cattle before your character. Don't give your life to the pursuits of the temporal.

Then, too, there is thought for the family here. Father and mother, what is the supreme desire of your hearts for your children? Deep down in the heart of your soul, as you look upon them from day to day, what aspiration for them transcends all others? You probably know; if you don't, it is well for you to find out. Have you planned for them a career of social conquest? Is that your ambition for these immortal beings committed to your care? Will their triumphs here meet the longings of your hearts? Do you want them to preside over homes where wealth is the paramount factor? Will that meet your aspiration? What

does your precept and example emphasize as your supreme desire for them? If you've not made them to see that your desire above all things else is that they be followers of Christ, in sympathy with His cause, beware, lest they justly consider your interest, or lack of interest in them, as the mark of a "Borderland Christian." The simple truth is this: we invite the title "Borderland Christian" when we are known to be only nominally, casually, incidentally, occasionally interested in spiritual things. We invite the title when we know ourselves we are giving more thought, more time, more zeal to worldly affairs, questionable pleasures, social frivolities than we are to the real and vital issues that challenge our prayers, our tears, our consecration. Your children may be bright, attractive, fascinating, beautiful. I hope they possess all of these charms; but are they Christians? Are they? You may be prosperous, cultured, popular, influential. I hope you are; but are you in vital union with Christ? Have you the sense of His indwelling spirit? Do you love His cause? Are you inexpressibly interested in the advance of His kingdom? Are you living in the heart of the spiritual Canaan to which God invites, and which for you is prepared, or are you content on the border, with the promised land ever mocking you with its unapproachable glory?

Another mark of a Borderland Christian:

II. "HE IS SATISFIED WITH A PARTIAL CONQUEST OF SPIRITUAL FOES"

Reuben and Gad had done some "faithful fighting." "They had helped to drive out some of the enemies of their own and of the Lord, but they seemed to subside while still the land of Canaan was full of the Lord's enemies." How illustrative is this attitude of borderland

Christians! They start with commendable enthusiasm. "They conquer some foes, they overcome some faults." Then they congratulate themselves and take what they consider a well-earned rest. They accept Christ, but they leave a large share of spiritual territory unconquered. Christianity means more than an acceptance of Christ. It means persistent, insistent conflict with foes that contest every inch of progress from the bearing of the cross to the wearing of the crown. The acceptance of Christ does not make an end of conflict. It inaugurates a warfare, the motto of which is, "Be thou faithful unto death"; "Endure to the end"; "Fight the good fight of faith." It is a "fight of faith," but it is a fight.

Paul was speaking of his spiritual conflict when he said, "I have fought a good fight." Enlistment in the service of Christ brings into view enemies that the unregenerate man does not recognize. A vision of Christ opens our eyes to see the numerous and formidable enemies that step out on the battlefield where spiritual forces contend. The great question with the Christian is not how many enemies I have conquered, but how many remain to be overcome. The habits you've not broken demand your attention. The faults you have not overcome challenge your spiritual weapons. You have two sins, we say. One of them is a cutting tongue, the other a violent temper. Both need your attention. Every part of your nature needs careful culture. Many persons we find, whose lives along certain lines are exemplary, but in other respects they are willfully and woefully lacking. The liberal man may not be a sweet-spirited man; the sweet-spirited man may not be a liberal man. You are not excusable for any habitual inconsistencies. The Christian life has many sides, and the exemplary Christian is the one whose character is well-rounded. He

makes Christ his standard in all things. His purpose is not to do as he pleases in many things, and to please Christ when it suits his own desires, but to earnestly and always do all the things that please Christ. The influence of the Christian ought always to be on the side of known righteousness, on the side of safety. To God he should always give the benefit of the doubt. May it not be true that there are many subtle enemies to our "growth in grace" that we have not recognized? We know we are not as near to God as we should be, as we desire to be, but because we enjoy certain pleasures we eliminate them as the possible sources of our unsatisfied spiritual condition. We seek in vain to discover the cause or causes, because we are not willing to surrender the real hindrances. No doubt many popular features of modern social life prevent the full enjoyment of Christian privileges and weaken the sum-total of Christian influence in the home, the church, the community. What we cannot do with an enlightened conscience void of offense toward man and God we had better leave undone.

To professing Christians belong the responsibility and privilege of making the standard in the community. And that standard ought to be a beneficent protest against every form of pleasureable indulgence that menaces Christian character or impairs Christian influence. If we are content simply to clear the land of a few enemies and sit down in supine submission, while the territory of the soul is traversed by other injurious forces, well may we ask ourselves the question: "Am I a Borderland Christian?"

Another mark:

III. "THE INFLUENCE OF THE BORDERLAND CHRISTIAN IS DISCOURAGING TO AGGRESSSIVE CHRISTIAN WORK"

"Moses did not like the request of Reuben and Gad because it was calculated to discourage the hearts of the peo-

ple." Why is it that almost every spiritual campaign is begun with the conscious handicap of many church members, whose lives are confessedly inconsistent? Instead of being a force to aid in the aggressive work, they are a part of the field to cultivate. Now there is some reason for this. What is it? Gospel privileges are theirs; God loves them; Jesus wants them in sympathy with His mission to save. Why are they so much less concerned in an aggressive spiritual effort than others are? Simply because they have been careless in the use of the means of grace. They have given their time, their thought, their endeavor to other things. They do not realize what an inexpressible burden they are to the heart of the pastor. They have made themselves non-conductors of spiritual power. There ought not to be a single member of the church who is not earnestly and prayerfully in sympathy with scriptural plans and spiritual progress. The only way to be ready is to be always ready. By the grace of God, are you doing your part to make spiritual interests a blessing for all time to your family, your church, your community? Are you, a professing Christian, willing to assume responsibility for failure that may be recognized in eternity as partially due to your lack of consecration? Is your life such that you can commend as a precious reality the Christian religion to your unsaved husband, to your unsaved child, to your Christless friend? If you are on the borderland, you are in no position to help others, you need help yourself. If you are on the borderland, your desire for the salvation of your unsaved loved ones and friends cannot be earnest and pronounced, much less effective. Make your own possession secure in the land of Canaan, and then you'll be constrained to persuade others to share with you your glorious inheritance.

Magnify your calling. Really belong to Christ. Make the church a place where God's honor dwelleth, where His saints enjoy His blessings, where the sinner is saved, and the echo of his transformation is the joy in Heaven.

One other mark of a borderland Christian:

IV. "THEY ARE ALWAYS THE FIRST TO FALL AWAY IN TIME OF STRESS"

"Reuben and Gad separated by the Jordan from the other tribes, lost the stimulus of fellowship, and were exposed to first attacks from heathen hordes among whom they had chosen to live"—always in difficulty and a source of anxiety to the other tribes.

The Christian cannot expect strength to resist in the time of trial and adversity unless he has lived in communion with God and His people. You cannot neglect fellowship with other Christians, sympathy with Christ's cause, the means of grace, prayer, Bible study, church attendance, without their accompaniment, hazardous exposure to the enemies that are ever ready to disturb your peace and to pillage your possessions. Are not many, more or less, borderland Christians? Are any as near to God as we ought to be, as we desire to be? Our spiritual Canaan has food for the soul surpassing the "grapes of Eschol." Let us magnify our spiritual privileges and obey the greater than Moses as He leads the way into our purchased possessions.

The position of the Christian should be like that of the tribe of Levi. "But unto the tribe of Levi, Moses gave not any inheritance. The Lord God of Israel was their inheritance." Let us say, "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, Thou maintainest my lot."

My unsaved friend, what efforts are you making to enter the promised land? Will you stay where you are? Let us all cross the Jordan into the land which the Lord our God shows us. Let us live in the heart of Canaan. What say you?

XVII

"LARGE LIFE *in* SMALL PLACE"

"And He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth."
—MATT. 2:23.

PRECIOUS, permanent and potential are the associations inseparable from the place of one's residence. "Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home." Even things inanimate are translated into our very being. Trees, flowers, meadows, mountains and rivers make their lasting contribution to character. Our text identifies Jesus Christ with a certain village. "He came and dwelt in a City called Nazareth." Joseph was guided to this place by the Angel of the Lord, and thus was fulfilled the prophecy concerning Christ, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Nazareth was a town of Galilee of little importance, not even mentioned in the Old Testament, and hence discredited by the Jews. Nathanael epitomized the Jewish opinion of this insignificant locality when he asked sarcastically of Philip, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

We read much in modern literature of the influence of environment. This is an element in the making of character by no means to be ignored. We should beware lest we stress this factor beyond its legitimate sphere. We are not solely dependent on circumstances. Man is made to be monarch of all he surveys. He has at his disposal powers that make him superior to circumstances. Circumstances only constitute the material with which he may work for the accomplishment of Heaven-ordained ends. Circumstances, like contrary winds, serve to test the strength of the vessel which is bound for the harbor of safety. Circum-

stances do not make men. Men are made by the persistent and successful effort to bring circumstances under their control. Statesmen, poets, preachers bear witness to this truth. Lincoln, Johnson, Garfield, superior to circumstances. Shakespeare, Cowper, Milton, superior to circumstances. Luther, Knox, Moody, superior to circumstances. Paul triumphed over opposition from within and without. He tunneled mountains of difficulty and finished his course with impressive glory. Jesus Christ, the Master of all—His environment the narrow, prejudiced, despised village of Nazareth—His influence, coextensive with the universe of God, and increasing with the roll of the ages.

We are so prone to vindicate our failure to live worthily, by asserting our lack of opportunity. Such attempt is destructive to a life that could be made conspicuous by usefulness, and is so utterly groundless as to challenge the unstinted wrath of an offended God.

The simple statement of our text reveals a truth of great importance. "And He came and dwelt in a City called Nazareth." This means "Large life in small place." Small place is a common difficulty. Most of us if we ever fill any place at all, it will be, must be, a small one; small from our standpoint, and yet large beyond measure if really filled. This world itself is small, compared with God's Universe, and certainly the place in this small world to be filled by one individual, who is merely an atom, must be small. Only a few occupy the summit of the mountain. The multitudes must remain in the valley, their lives must urge on at lowlier levels. Not many merchant princes—not many eminent lawyers, not many skillful physicians, not many real poets, not many genuine philosophers, not many profound scholars, not many far-seeing statesmen, not many commendable philanthropists, not many great preachers, not many re-

sourceful generals. Most of us belong to the rank and file, but the battle may rage with fury at the point we occupy, and victory, or defeat, may be largely the result of our apathy, or activity. "There is the small place of common circumstance—the small place of daily routine, the small place of sorrow, the small place of misfortune." The use we make of these small places measures the sphere that we are challenged to fill, and determines the reward with which we shall be crowned.

We stand at the seashore. The tide comes in. "It fits itself to every least winding of the shore, floods up into each inlet, exactly mates itself to the various indentations and projections." Someone says, "On a day last Spring I had a great and unforgettable experience. I rode into the modern town of Nazareth of Galilee. I saw the fountain, whence the people of Nazareth get their water supply. Well, the Mother of our Lord used to dip her great earthen jar into that fountain and lift it to her head, and march with it balanced there. And the boy Jesus would follow her down the hill, along the rough and stony street, as I saw boys following their mothers. I saw the houses in which the ordinary people live in Nazareth—a cube of stone of sun-dried brick. Houses of but one room. I saw a carpenter shop. But you could not find anywhere among us carpenters' tools so poor and rude. In some such house Jesus lived. In some such shop He wrought, and with such tools." "As the tide mates itself to the shore, so Jesus fits Himself to our ordinary lives." "If we know small places, Jesus knew them too. And yet, the largest life ever lived went on in that small place of Nazareth for the whole of its earthly existence, save the last three years."

Let us seek to discover how Jesus lived the "Large life in the small place." He is our example, given not to discourage us, but "That we should follow in His steps."

I. "By Thoroughness of Living"

"Jesus wrought thoroughly in that carpenter's shop." "He turned out no shabby work." We can't conceive of Him, putting less in anything that He did, than the hand, the head, and the heart. How true the old saying, "Anything that is worth doing at all, is worth doing well." In fact nothing is done unless it is done well. The person who is guided by this principle lives a large and worthy life, no matter how small his sphere may be. The person who is not controlled by this principle, lives a small and unsatisfactory life, no matter how large his sphere may be. The conscientious man is bound to be serviceable and happy. The man who does right, because it is right, is the man who rises superior to all criticism, and stands exultingly removed from all censure. The great question is not where I work, but how I perform. This Divine principle is of immeasurable comfort to those who are handicapped by earth's false standards. We are prone to judge by the amount done. Heaven says, "Well done" to those who have done thoroughly, be their tasks small or great. God's standard is a great leveler. The man of two talents, and the man of five talents, have an equal opportunity. It is possible for the man with two talents to go beyond the man with five talents. Diligent use of the two talents means more in God's eyes, than diligent use of four talents in the hands of the man possessed of five talents. Fidelity is God's unerring standard. And we are not to be too careful in discriminating between the secular and the sacred. All duty is sacred. Thorough, conscientious work in that car-

penter shop was just as imperative on the part of Christ as faithful proclamation of the truth, which fell with such force upon the multitudes, who waited upon His Ministry.

In fact, our broadest sphere for testimony is in the thorough performance of the daily duty. Thirty years of Christ's life were spent in Nazareth. This proportion fairly represents our every life. Fidelity in this thirty years, made possible the three years so crowded with usefulness. The whole of Christ's life was sacred. He lived thirty-three years in touch with God, and every moment of that life was counted a sacred responsibility. Christianity is not a theory, separated and isolated from common life, but a great principle permeating and controlling every phase and feature of human existence. What a pity that we do not recognize and practice this great principle! Homelife, business life, social life, political life, would have a new meaning. We cannot, we dare not, narrow Christianity to worship on the Sabbath, and make it but a small part of the life here. Life in its entirety, we are to live, "by the faith of the Son of God."

Failure to appreciate this great truth is largely responsible for the characteristic carelessness of many professing Christians in the home, in business, in social affairs.

We need an awakening on the scriptural place of the home in our Christian civilization. Alas, that the home should be regarded as "small place" by so many. So large a place is it, that the man, or woman, who fills it, lives a life that can only be measured by the eternal years of God. There may be other spheres for some women to fill, but the ideal sphere is in the home. Next to Christ, Himself, a Christian mother is God's best gift. Not only her own children, but poets, philosophers, sages, rise up and call her blessed. Her name may not be found in the social

items, and her picture may not adorn the page of the large newspaper. But her influence is stamped on civilization, and her teaching is recorded in the hearts of her children. Her hand and head and heart may be seen in the marts of trade, in the palaces of justice, in the halls of congress, and in the pulpit of the Gospel Ministry. Men may have their portraits in the "Hall of Fame," but usually, a mother's love, a mother's character, a mother's precept and example, are responsible for this distinction. Large life in the home.

Large life in business. The life you live there is the life that counts, and the life by which you are to measure your reward. Hiram Goffthe old shoemaker—had for his pastor a young minister. Hiram insisted that his work was by divine appointment, and declared that if he were thorough in his work of making and mending shoes, he was on the same level in God's sight as the ardent young minister. Your Christianity is not of the right stamp if it does not declare its principle in every transaction you have with your fellowmen. Christ in the carpenter shop, means that you can declare Him behind the counter, in the office, on the farm, in the home.

Surely this thoroughness should be pronounced in our church work. Strange to say, some seem to expect the work of the church to prosper, regardless of the safe and sane principles, which men follow in their daily vocations. Lack of thoroughness augurs lack of spirituality and lack of spirituality augurs lack of success. We need conscientious accuracy in every sphere of the church's work. The minister should perform the duties of his office. The Elders should perform the duties of the eldership. The Deacons should perform the duties of the diaconate. The Sabbath-school teacher, the duties of his, or her position. The scholars, the duty of their position. The members of the choir should

perform their duties. In no other way can we take pleasure in the Lord's work, and in no other way can we commend "The Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation." Let every member of the church be thoroughly conscientious in the discharge of duty, and instead of complaint, we would have thanksgiving, instead of apathy, zeal, instead of depression, exaltation.

Christ lived the "Large life in small place"

II. "BY GREAT MOTIVE"

"All he did sprang out of the great motive to please the Father and help others." What grandeur this gives to life! Our business in this world is not to make a living but to live a life. Making a living is incidental. Living a life is monumental. Christ wrought at the carpenter's bench not primarily to sustain Himself, but to please His Father and to help others. Paul made tents to aid him in his supreme work of preaching, "The unsearchable riches of Christ."

Your home is not for your selfish enjoyment, but should be an institution to glorify God and bless humanity. Your business is not a money-making establishment for your temporal prosperity, but a means for the promotion of God's cause in human hearts. If you have the desire and the ability to accumulate, back of this should be the motive to make all you can for the spread of the gospel and extension of Christ's Kingdom. Your social qualities are not for reckless and questionable purposes, but for "condescension to men of low estate," for the alleviation of suffering, for the comfort of the sorrowing, and for the heartening of the dying. There are probably enough sick and distressed all around us to demand all the time that we have that does not conflict with other duties.

The first Victoria crosses were awarded in Hyde Park, London, in 1857. Someone relates this pathetic incident—"A veteran terribly maimed came up to receive the medal, and the Queen, flinging down the medal, turned her back upon the troops, and covering her face with both hands, burst into a torrent of tears. For a moment astonishment reigned in the park, and then the troops broke into wild cheering. The Duke of Cambridge, and his staff rode madly along the excited soldiery, and with immense difficulty restrained the enthusiasm within safe bounds. All the while the maimed man stood still, with no sign of life, but the pathetic look from his sunk, worn eyes; and then the Queen recovered her composure and pinned the medal to his clasp. As she did so she spoke some words which have not been recorded; but the soldier's answer was plainly heard, 'God bless Your Majesty. We would bear it all again for Queen and Country.'" "For Queen and Country." There is a greater watchword than that "For God and Humanity."

Jesus lived the large life

III. "By Cherishing Great Thoughts"

"He nourished his soul upon the scriptures." His Father's care he saw in the falling sparrow and the growing lily. Large life is the product of meditation upon fundamental principles. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." We need to cultivate the art of seeing "sermons in stones and good in everything." The architect may do his work and make it a practical illustration of the "House not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The yard-stick may suggest to the merchant the accuracy with which God measures motives and deeds. The physician may find in his practice the sympathetic touch, and the comforting ministrations of

the Great Healer. The lawyer may so identify himself with his client as to suggest to his own heart the need of the great "Advocate with the Father." Christ in His daily work gave His mind to great thoughts, and by so doing, made such music with the rude tools as to gladden His own heart and glorify His Father in Heaven.

Christ lived the large life

IV. By Cherishing Consciousness of Fellowship With the Heavenly Father"

This he never lost. Sin has meant to us separation, but we may be "brought nigh by the blood of Christ." Conscious fellowship with God magnifies and glorifies small places. "Enoch walked with God." We are promised the "Spirit of God to bear witness with our spirit that we are His children." In the home, in business, in social life, in civic life, "Our citizenship is in Heaven." We may here "walk along the celestial heights communing with the Infinite." God is not far from any of us. He is a present help. His spirit broods over us. His countenance beams upon us. His Heaven shines above us. His glory encircles us. Significant the reply of Jesus to the Samaritan woman. She seemed to limit fellowship with God to designated places of worship. Said she, "Our Fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus replied, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." Conscious communion at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances.

"Large life in small place." Not where I live, but what I live. Not where I labor, but how I perform. I know a minister, whose first pastorate was not large. Sometimes

his soul clamored for broader opportunities. In his congregation was a young man who waited earnestly upon his ministry. The young man's heart was turned toward the Gospel. Imagine the joy in my heart, in after years, when the student for the ministry told me that I had done more than anyone else to mold his character and to define his mission. "Large life in small place." Not how long, but how well we live.

Not long since, a young man of high ideals and prophetic usefulness was called from earth. Numerous friends bore generous tribute to his impressive life. Brief, his sojourn, according to human computation, but he lived long, because he lived well. Jesus Christ went away at thirty-three years of age, but He is living more potentially today than when He was here on the earth. His example is the great dynamo that furnishes the power that moves human hearts to effective and universal service.

"Large life in small place" prepares for large life in large place. A few years ago a young man started at the bottom in the life insurance business. Now he is State Manager of one of the great insurance companies of the world. Promotion, when deserved, is God's plan. Faithful Sabbath-school scholar now—instructive teacher in the future. Earnest worker now—an honored and influential officer in the church some day not distant. Jesus, the humble carpenter. Jesus, the peerless teacher. Jesus, the patient pusher of the plane. Jesus, the worker of miracles. Jesus, in humiliation, the Son of Joseph—Jesus, in exaltation, the Son of God. Jesus, despised and rejected here—Jesus, loved and crowned with glory yonder. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things." Here we are. Not the amount done, but

the spirit in which we do it. Our sphere, comparatively, small place. But in our work we may all have large life. "Well done" just as possible for every one of us as for Melancthon, or Luther, Moody, or a Spurgeon, John, or a Paul.

"Fading away like the stars of the morning—
Losing their light in the glorious Sun—
Thus would we pass from the earth and its toiling,
Only remembered by what we have done."

XVIII

THOUGHTS *and* TEARS

"And when he thought thereon, he wept."—MARK 14:72.

THIS language is associated with a bitter experience in the life of the Apostle Peter. In the hour of his Lord's trial, he denied with an oath that he was one of His disciples. Jesus had predicted that Peter would disown Him, but with measure of self-confidence this ardent and impulsive man had said, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." Jesus said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice!" Shortly afterwards one of the maids of the High Priest said to Peter, "And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth." But he denied, saying, "I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest." "And he went out into the porch and the cock crew." He denies again, and again, and at the conclusion of the third denial, in accurate keeping with Christ's prediction, the cock crows a second time. "And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him before the cock crow twice, thou shall deny me thrice." "And when he thought thereon, he wept." How could he do otherwise? The spectacle was enough to make the angels weep. A professed disciple of Christ, disowning Him before His enemies, at the very hour He needed most his pronounced allegiance.

Whatever excuses may be offered in palliation of Peter's offense, it remains true that He was guilty of a great sin, and only the love of a gracious and all-sufficient Savior could restore him to the active duties of discipleship. Peter's case is a typical one. The magnitude of sin, the treachery

of disloyalty are frequently not realized until the sober second thought. Then how terrible the realization, how relentless the remorse! Our sins of omission and commission are manifold and aggravating. But painful as is the pressure of this realization, nevertheless in the conviction of our guilt do we find the ray of hope that prophesies the cheering light that awaits our confession.

Consciousness of sin precedes the joy of pardon. The thinking and weeping Apostle gives us a pathetic picture, but more deplorable would have been his condition, if he had been indifferent to the awful sin of denying his Lord.

"And when he thought thereon, he wept." Thoughts and tears mingled in this text and incident, and thoughts and tears are inseparable companions in these lives of ours. The man who thinks is the man who weeps. The contemplative mood stirs the depths of the soul and leads to reformation and consecration. If a man can be persuaded to think he can be impelled to weep, and if he can be impelled to weep, he can be induced to repent, and to change his course of life. "Man is evidently made for thinking. This is the only excellence he can boast. To think aright is the sum of human duty, and the true art of thinking is to begin with ourselves, our author and our end. And yet what is it that engrosses the thoughts of the world? Not any of these objects, but pleasure, wealth, honor and esteem, in fact, the making ourselves kings, without reflecting what it is to be a king, or to be a man."

Thinking and weeping are inseparable from the deepest realities of life. The little child possesses a beautiful treasure in the shape of a doll. The hour of destruction, which awaits most of these toys, comes. The thought of this child relative to the shattered idol causes her to weep and to pour out her heart in profuse tears, nestled in the moth-

er's arms. The school boy struggles to solve an intricate problem, and after prolonged effort fails in the solution. The thought of inability to master the problem is expressed in regretful tears. The young man starts out in life with buoyant hopes of success. He soon finds that he is to contend with fearful odds in an exacting world with meager measure of sympathy, and when he thinks thereon he weeps.

The young woman leaves the home of her childhood, where tenderness and care have swayed her precious life, and confides her destiny to one she pledges to love, cherish, and honor. If she does not find in her husband the qualities, which she thinks he possesses, and which made an irresistible appeal to her affections, the thought of her disappointment and the contrast between her present and her former associations so disturb her heart as to cause the free flow of tears.

And there are sacred memories that come trooping into our minds that cause the tears to flow. In your home there is a vacant chair. It is the old arm-chair in which mother sat. You can see her now with the kindly look from her drooping eyes, with the needle in her unsteady fingers, and the piece of work in her wrinkled hands. She lived, she wrought, she died, she is gone. Thoughts and tears tell the story of your loneliness. When you think thereon, you weep. You love the children in your home. You are grateful to God for their presence. Their quaint sayings and their gleeful ways break the monotony of life. But they are not all with you. One day the Master comes down into the garden of your household, and gathers a lily. The little hands are folded, the bright eyes are closed, the angel reaper has garnered for the skies. You haven't forgotten the hour of departure. You can't forget. Ofttimes you wonder how that child would look if the life had been

spared. You note the other children at play, or passing to and fro from school—you view them with mingled pleasure and pain, for their presence suggests the absence of your treasure. Sometimes you tenderly handle some little articles which were made to adorn the body of the little one—a tiny pair of worn shoes. There you sit and think. The tears stream down your face, and you say with an earnest emphasis that touches your Heavenly Father's heart—"The shoes my baby used to wear."

The thoughts and tears in the relations of life which have been called to our attention illustrate their associated importance in the spiritual realm, where our obligations are supreme, and our opportunities are commanding. These thoughts and tears are in connection with our relation to Christ. "And when he thought thereon, he wept." The Gospel of Luke gives us a vivid picture of this incident. After the denial, the record is, "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter went out and wept bitterly." This is the urgent thought. Thoughts and tears in reference to our relation to Jesus Christ—out attitude toward Him, our obligations to His cause, our personal responsibility to His Kingdom.

I wish that His searching, appealing look would cause us to shed tears of genuine repentance. There is probably not one of us who has not been guilty, either of positive denial, or apathy, or indifference, toward Christ, and the duties pertaining to His cause and our own spiritual welfare. Let us see. We are His professed disciples. That means that we have voluntarily assumed spiritual obligations and that we have pledged ourselves to cleave unto the Lord, and to magnify in our lives the principles taught and lived by the Author of our Salvation. Have we been true to the trust He left us? Do we seek to do our best? Some are

not regular attendants on the services of the sanctuary. Sabbaths pass without your presence in the Lord's House. This is discouraging to the pastor, grievous to the faithful attendants, detrimental to the non-churchgoers, and a positive injury to your own religious life. Does not the thought of this neglect stir your heart and bring tears to your eyes? "And when he thought thereon, he wept."

You have in your home immortal children. The strength of your hold upon them ought to be beyond that of any others. For their religious instruction, both by precept and example, you are primarily responsible. Do they know that your greatest concern for them is that they be sincere Christians—consecrated to God? Do your "walk and conversation" convince them that you realize that you are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth desiring a better country," or are they persuaded by your words and examples that your supreme purpose is to make money, or to enjoy social pleasure, or to obtain earthly honors?

Is there a Family Altar in your home at which you daily gather, in recognition of God's goodness, with family confession of sin, and family desire to know and to do the will of God? Is your family a united family? Wait—don't answer, yes, without serious thought. Are all Christians? That makes a united family. Is there any member of your home, who if called hence, you would have any doubt of his or her future? Have you done your utmost as a professing Christian to lead that member to Christ? If tonight the death angel should call one of your treasures, could you say I am conscious of no neglect—I did my best to persuade the unsaved husband or wife, or son, or daughter, to become a Christian?

Well, my hearer, the day is not far distant when your family circle will be broken, how soon I cannot say, but it

will be soon. Are all ready to go? Is your peace made with God? Do you parents take an active, personal interest in the secular education, in the social status of your children, and do you say and act, I have nothing special to do with their religious tendencies? God, forbid! "And when he thought thereon, he wept."

You are not a Christian. Why? Echo answers, why? God has been good to you. You were reared in a Christian land. You were taught to pray when you were a child—"Now I lay me down to sleep"—and for years God has watched over you while you slept, and He has prospered you during your waking hours. The talents and energies of your life you have consecrated to temporal aims and earthly pursuits. For your own sake you need to confess Christ. For the sake of your influence you ought to confess Christ. For the sake of Christ who gave Himself for your redemption, you ought to become a Christian.

You may be just starting in life—a boy—a girl—a young man—a young woman. Life is before you. What are you going to do with it? The experience of those who are Christians and of those who are not, declare to you with almost equal emphasis—give your heart to Christ now. Nothing else satisfies. Christ does. If you wait, death may take you before you decide for Christ. If you live and declare your allegiance to Christ later, thoughts and tears will be inevitable, for you will never cease to regret that you disowned your Savior so long, and the influence Christ might have had, the wicked one will continue to use with destructive power in his business. There are earnest Christians today who recall their failure to give themselves to Christ earlier. The experience of many, if not all of them, our text declares. "And when he thought thereon, he wept."

You are a member of the church; deep down in your heart you don't know whether you ought to be or not. You feel no pressing sense of obligation to Christ. You know you ought to be in sympathy with the purposes of the Church. But your influence is not on the Lord's side. You give more thought, more time, more zeal to worldly pleasures and earthly organizations than to the church of Jesus Christ. You can't afford to miss an opportunity for social pleasure, but you are rarely in the house of God. You are neither a teacher nor a scholar in the Sabbath-school. You are a stranger to the week-day prayer meeting. Do you stand there? "And when he thought thereon, he wept."

You were once interested in Christ's cause. You are still a nominal church member, but you are not positively identified with His people. You have been sliding back. The memories of your former active and enjoyable participation in Christian work are mingled memories of joy and pain. The devil tries to prevent you from thinking of those happy days, and endeavors to content you with your present attitude.

The church letter which you don't know whether you are entitled to or not, has been neglected. It is not where you once lived, for you have been absent too long to make it good. It is not where you now are, for you have neglected to present it. Where are you today? You are in reality, without a church home—out of touch with your former church, and not in actual relation with the church you now attend. "And when he thought thereon, he wept."

Then too, how many around us who need the word of encouragement, and the deed of kindness! We have had the opportunity to cheer their lonely hearts—to make their burdens lighter. Some of them are gone from us. In recent years no one of my acquaintances is called into the

presence of God, that I do not ask myself the question—was I as helpful to that one as I might have been?

Then there are the multitudes of perishing souls in this and other lands. How much are we doing for them? Are we praying for them, giving our means to them? Are we making our lives count for their salvation? "And when he thought thereon, he wept."

Let us look our Lord straight in the eyes, and permit Him to search us through and through. Let us think and weep and be moved to a deeper realization of our responsibilities.

Some one has said, "They are good tears which burst from our hearts, when we look upon Him, whom we have pierced, and weep as a mother that weepeth for an only son—the tears which Christ wept over Jerusalem fallen and impenitent, forseeing its relentless doom—the tears of compassion which He wept over the sorrows of the House of Lazarus—the tears which Paul shed, when in the city of Ephesus, he went by night and by day, from house to house, entreating the people to be reconciled unto God." "The tears of spiritual desire after spiritual good, or the tears of sorrow when God has hidden His countenance, or removed our candlestick out of its former place."

The denial of Peter was grievous but the Lord abundantly pardoned him. He sent him a special message after His resurrection, and He again commissioned him to "Feed His sheep."

Earth is a vale of tears. But if the tears we shed here are the result of sorrow for neglect of duty, for the commission of sin, they are not in vain. "No tears are shed there."

XIX

"*The* OTHER"

"The Other."—LUKE 23:40.

THE salvation of the thief on the cross was a practical demonstration of Christ's ability "to save unto the uttermost." That the Son of God went out of this world between a gateway of two thieves was eminently in accord with His mission. The prophet Isaiah speaks of Him as being "numbered with transgressors."

His association in the very article of death with sinners of degraded type magnified the condescension to "men of low estate." The opportunity to prove His compassion for lost souls as He hung upon the cross was more than compensation for the ignominious death He suffered.

The closing hours of Christ's life were crowded with significant incidents, but not one of them speaks with deeper pathos and more appealing impressiveness than that which has to do with the penitent thief. The two extremes of humanity appear, in the person of Christ on the one hand and the thief on the other. Jesus, whose character was perfect, in whom His enemies could find no fault. The thief, whose distance in life from Christ can be best illustrated by the "impassable gulf" that yawned between Dives and Lazarus. More than this. Christ was the embodiment of the measureless perfections of Deity, and the thief was the incarnation of satanic malignity. The affinity between these two characters is the marvel of marvels, the miracle of grace, the eloquent tribute to the most glorious attributes of God—love and mercy.

The character of the thief is the dark background that brings into bold and beautiful relief this picture of exquisite touches. In an earthly court, when a man is on trial for his life, his previous character has an important bearing upon the issue of the case and is frequently used as a convincing argument in favor of leniency or acquittal. In the trial of the soul before Christ as the Judge, not the man's previous character, but his present need and desire are the determining factors.

This thief was doubtless a Jew; probably had been an enemy of Christ and the cause for which He stood. Belonging to that race of which Jesus was a member, his sympathy with His mission might reasonably have been pronounced and encouraging; but doubtless the measure of his baneful influence had been given against this "disturber of the Peace." He had become a hardened criminal; so much so that he joined his voice with the depraved mob about the cross, and mocked the peerless and innocent Man with whom he was now associated in ignominy. But the glory of the Gospel consists in its prompt and gracious response to the expressed need of the soul, regardless of previous condition of servitude.

The helpless and depraved condition of the thief was no barrier to the designs of Christ. Rather did it furnish the opportunity and incentive to the exercise of His boundless mercy and saving ability.

The very condition Christ came to meet confronted Him in the person of the pitiable wretch who was swinging out into eternity. The genius of Christ's mission was sublimely manifest in this incident. The purpose of His suffering was to have vindication in the very hour of crucifixion. A trophy of God's grace was to be awarded Him in the supreme moment of His obedience unto death. All other

attendant circumstances on this dark hour were to be eclipsed by Christ's matchless and prevailing interest in the soul that needed the healing touch of His omnific finger.

An interesting theological question thrusts itself upon us. By what power was this thief enabled to discern his guilt and to apprehend the mercy of God in Christ? The Spirit of God, who works when and where and how He pleases, must have moved upon his heart and impelled him to a changed attitude. Seeing Christ enforces the necessity for Him and in His light the thief saw light. A man may seek to argue himself into irresponsibility, but the sober and serious moment fastens inevitably the thought of responsibility. The God of the universe will ever and anon press his sovereign right upon a man's conscience. The Being against whom sin is committed is none other than the infinite and authoritative God, and the soul under conviction submerges itself into the abysmal thought of the Psalmist: "Against thee and thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." The absorbing thought of the aroused soul is the presence of a great Moral Personality in the universe who has in His righteous grasp the destiny of men.

Self-condemnation is not the verdict of the pessimist, but the calm and deliberate conclusion of the optimist. The justice of God finds its vindication in the "Amen" of the self-condemned soul. A man may say, "My punishment is greater than I can bear," but rarely does he aver, "My punishment is greater than I deserve."

The thief admitted that his reward was due for his deeds. This is the steady teaching of the Scriptures; and throughout the sacred volume incidents that emphasize this rational attitude are given. The sinner never with propriety asks for God's justice, because he knows that the consistent answer is condemnation, but the recognition of

impending and deserved justice presses the appeal for mercy. All the world is justly guilty before God. This measurement of desert is sanctioned by the Word of God, and to this sanction the condemned soul gives hearty and congruous response. Christ on the one hand, the thief on the other. Physically near, spiritually distant, prayer and faith the medium of connection. The thief prayed, "Remember me"—condescend to give me a thought. The thought of Christ is sufficient. The thief believed that Christ would hear requests and grant blessings. There probably came to his mind the many distressed and forsaken who had been the unworthy but joyful recipients of Christ's disposition. His life had been one of constant and manifold benedictions. He had lifted up His hands in blessings without number. These had been prodigal and had fallen with impartial hand. If any distinction were made it was with reference to those who were most helpless and needy. This thief entertained the highest possible human conception of Christ. His faith was sublime. "No such faith was shown by others, even Christ's apostles. The dying thief eclipsed all other believers."

In the judgment of man the thief deserves nothing but condemnation. Christ might have allowed this poor soul the deserts of justice and an eternal portrait in the gallery of rogues, but here, as in other instances, He was moved with compassion and was true to His divine mission of salvation. Christ thought enough of "the other" to hear and answer his prayer in the moment of His crucifixion agony. He thought enough of the sinner by His side to grant him the greatest of all boons—salvation from himself and a place in His eternal kingdom. He thought enough of him to bestow upon him the grace of God, through which alone salvation is possible. He thought

enough of him to make him "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." He thought enough of him to snatch him as a brand from the burning. He thought enough of him to make his dire extremity His own glorious opportunity.

This incident is frequently cited as a warrant for the postponement of the reception of Christ until the dying hour. It undoubtedly pays tribute to the infinite reaches of God's grace. It teaches the comforting lesson of possible death-bed repentance. Yet, while it enforces the lesson "never despair," it also emphasizes the other lesson, "never presume."

One of these malefactors was taken and the other left. One was pardoned and one was left to the just condemnation of his own sins. What made the difference? Do not fail to see it. It is radical; it is urgent; it is inevitable. The attitude of these two malefactors toward Christ and the cross on which He hung determined woe for the one and weal for "the other."

Your attitude toward the cross of Christ will determine whether you are saved from your sins or left to die in your sins.

What think ye of Christ? If you are a sinner you are in your dire extremity. Now is Christ's opportunity. That present moment was the thief's opportunity to accept Christ. This present moment is your opportunity. Christ is just as able and willing to save you now as He was then to save the penitent thief. He is just as near you now as He was to him, if you will call upon Him.

But you must call. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Saved just as you are, without trying to make yourself better. The thief hadn't

time to improve his condition, and this is neither rational nor possible. Just as he was. Just as you are.

The lives of both of these robbers had been appallingly wicked and despicable. Christ is on the cross of atoning sacrifice. One of them had nothing to do with this Just Man. "The other" prayed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The unpardonable sin is the sin that is never pardoned; and the sin that is never pardoned is wilful and final rejection of Christ.

Why was the one lost and "the other" saved? Because one rejected Christ and "the other" accepted Him.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day:
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

XX. A Great Question

"Why sit we here until we die."—II. Kings 7:3.

There was a great famine in Samaria. The city was besieged by Benhadad, the king of Syria. Elijah prophesies relief for the suffering inhabitants. The relief comes form an unexpected source; the Lord intervenes by making the hosts of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and horses. The Syrians fled for their lives, leaving their camps with abundant provisions. "There were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate, and they said one to another, 'Why sit we here until we die? If we say we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also. Now, therefore, come and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: If they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.'" These four leprous men are typical of the sinner. A condition of need and desperation. The stricken city of Samaria is a picture of the world's emptiness and its inability to make provision for the hunger of the soul. The abundance in the Syrian camp, made accessible by the Lord, aptly illustrates the ample provision in the Gospel of God's grace for those "who hunger and thirst after righteousness." "Why sit we here until we die?" This is a great question. Let us consider it personally, earnestly, profitably. It's a great question for several reasons:

I. It is a Fundamental Question

It has to do with life. "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Life is the gift of God and the preservation

of life is a matter of fundamental importance. Of what value are other blessings that pertain to our comfort and enjoyment if we are besieged with the pangs of hunger? The physical man must be sustained by something to eat. The one thing a hungry man needs is bread. Food is necessary to health, to happiness, to toil, to prosperity. The commissary, in time of war, is indispensable. . . . The absence of food means soldiers with lagging step, sunken eye, flagging loyalty, meager service, broken spirit. The gratification of hunger is a fundamental consideration. Thought, purpose, power, achievement, are inseparably related with the food that nourishes and sustains the physical life. "Why sit we here until we die?" How can we live, if the staff of life on which we lean is out of our reach? Now Jesus said: "I am the Bread of Life." Jesus, then, is the fundamental necessity for the spiritual life. Jesus is as really the foundation of spiritual strength and spiritual achievement, as food is the foundation of physical strength and physical achievement. If men will not only willingly, but gladly, sacrifice all for the gratification of physical hunger, is it not passing strange that they hesitate to do the same for the gratification of spiritual hunger? The physical man must soon perish, but the soul is immortal.

II. THIS IS A RATIONAL QUESTION

The desire to live is natural. Not to want to live is unnatural. What more reasonable than to consider means for the alleviation of one's distress? The impulse to extricate one's self from danger is in the highest degree rational. The turning point in the prodigal's life is marked by this significant language, "When he came to himself." His wilful, wayward conduct was irrational. His desire to par-

take again of the blessings of his father's provision was rational and commendable. How utterly unreasonable it would have been for these lepers to have been indifferent to the stern fact of starvation with which they were confronted! Not to have discussed the means of possible relief would have been a reflection on their intelligence. That they asked this question was an evidence of sanity and an expression of normal humanity. They were sensible enough to know that their hunger called for food and that food was intended to satisfy hunger. So men know that Christianity is reasonable. Sin is madness. Unbelief is irrational. Belief and righteousness are rational. The hunger of the soul is an intense, persistent, undeniable, unconquerable fact, and this fact is not only an evidence, but a proof that somewhere there is food to satisfy the soul. How clearly and scientifically Jesus states this wholesome truth: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Their hunger and thirst shall not go unappeased. What an anomalous situation if we should be created with the sensations of hunger and thirst and there should be no provision to meet these desires! How irrational, if not absurd, that the soul longs for spiritual food, and yet no provision is made for this need and desire. David was both rational and scientific, when he said: "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," and also when he said: "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." My spiritual hunger demonstrates to me that Christ is the "Bread of Life," and that He quenches human thirst, because He said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "The soul of man has a capacity for God, and nothing that earth affords can satisfy the longings of the human heart."

III. A PERPLEXING QUESTION

"Why sit we here until we die?" Why? why? why? The perplexity of these leprous men is expressed in this language: "If we say we will enter into the city, the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; and if we stay here, we die also. Now, therefore, come and let us fall unto the hosts of the Syrians. If they save us alive, we shall live, and if they kill us, we shall but die!" How suggestive this perplexing condition! We are in a world where questions are inseparable from our very existence. Here we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," endowed with a will, affections, sensibilities, with a conscience, with a soul. What to do with yourself, and for yourself, is a question as relentless as the passing of time. Some counsel this, and some that, and some the other. You are not satisfied where you are; your position by nature is one of sin, and yet one of responsibility. There is famine for your soul in the city, in the world which bids for your allegiance. The logic of your appeal to what the world offers you for your real hunger is graphically portrayed in the degradation of the prodigal, "Mere husks that the swine did eat."

Now these lepers were perplexed, but the solution of their difficulty they found. They took the only course that offered possible relief. They threw themselves on those whom they considered hostile, the Syrians, and did so in desperation. "If they save us alive we shall live, and if they kill us we shall but die."

My dear friends, you may hesitate to solve your perplexity, because you feel that you are "an alien from the commonwealth of Israel." The leprous condition of your soul may constrain you to hesitate to flee unto Christ, but this is your only alternative. The contemplative soul must

reach the conclusion: "Unto whom shall I go but unto Thee; Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is nothing but death elsewhere. You can't make your condition any worse. Resolve with Esther, "I will go in unto the King and if I perish, I perish."

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away I know
I must forever die."

IV. An Urgent Question

"Why sit we here until we die?" It doesn't take long to die from starvation. The hungry man not only needs food, but he needs food now. The thirsty man not only needs water, but he needs water now. The question that confronted these lepers was a question of life, or death. Which would it be? Every moment of delay and indecision enhanced their peril, clouded their hope. The question of all questions with them was whether they would live, or die. This was not only the supreme question, but so grave was the issue, it was the only question.

O, sin-stricken, diseased soul, what you need above all things else is the touch of the great Physician. The questions of ambition, of wealth, of position are only incidental. Your urgent situation is this:

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

This is an urgent question because "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." It is an urgent question, because on the wings of the wind you are fleeing to the judgment bar of

God. It is an urgent question, because "Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation." Urgent because in the twinkling of an eye it may be too late for you to answer. It is an urgent question because your own answer determines where you will spend eternity.

V. It's a Pathetic Question

"Why sit we here until we die?" O, the indescribable horrors of famine! How our hearts and our means have gone out to the sufferers from this pathetic scourge! An awful death that—death from starvation! O, the pity of it! Death from any cause is sad. To die is pathos concentrated. "Until we die!" How pathetic the hour of death! The pathos of tears, of conflict, of memory! How startling the announcement of the beloved physician, "He is gone, the end has come." I have been by the bedside of the dying, and so have you. It is a scene we can never forget. Some I can see now as the countenance changed, as the lamp of life flickered, as the eyes closed, as the last breath was drawn. To that hour we must all come. I must walk, you must walk through the "Valley of the Shadow of Death." "It is appointed unto men once to die." O, the pathos of physical death! "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." I don't know what the death of the soul means; I don't want to know. It may mean eternity with the ceaseless consciousness of this: "It might have been." Suppose it means death—cessation of life, annihilation, oblivion. Is that desirable? Is that satisfactory to a man made in the image of God, and created with possibilities for an immortal blessedness? If to die means annihilation that means "far short of the glory of God." As for me, I want to live beyond the "sunset's radiant glow." I want to have a conscious, blissful, endless life with the "spirits of just

men made perfect." I want to walk on the banks of the pure river "clear as crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God." I want to sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. I want to see Paul, who here on earth was shown how great things he must suffer for Christ's sake. I want to see that "crown," which he said was laid up for him, and for all who love His appearing. I want to go in and out and find pasture in the land "where the sun never sets, and the leaves never fade." I want to be a member of the Heavenly choir on the plains of celestial light, and mingle my voice with that glorified host who sing the new song "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Annihilation? No! Oblivion? No! Either is an anti-climax. Annihilation is destruction; oblivion is eternal ignominy. Let me make Paul's realization mine: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"—or more Christ.

VI. It is a Personal Question

"And they said one to another, why sit we here until we die?" They were all in the same predicament, starvation staring each man in the face. All of them and each of them felt the pangs of hunger. One man can't eat for another man. Hunger is an individual question. Three of these lepers might have gone to the camp of the Syrians and eaten, but that would not have sufficed for the one who remained behind. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "There is none that doeth good, no not one." It is *your* soul that needs salvation, *your* spiritual nature that needs the "Bread of life," *your* soul-thirst that

needs to be quenched. It is your husband who is not a Christian, your wife, your children, your loved ones, your friends. Your personal relation to Christ settles your destiny. You "must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ." You must give "an account for the deeds done in your body." "What shall *I* do with Jesus?" "What shall *I* do to inherit eternal life?" "What shall *I* render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Where shall *I* spend eternity? The personal Christ is for personal appropriation. He wants to receive you unto Himself; He wants to prepare a place for you; He wants you to sit down at the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb"—your prayer: "Lord, help me." "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." You are hungry; Christ is the "Bread of life" for you.

VII. A PROMISING QUESTION

1. Promising, because the spirit of inquiry puts one in the way of the solution of any problem. To be in need is one thing; to realize that need is another thing. Conviction leads to repentance; and repentance leads to pardon; and pardon leads to peace. David said: "I thought on my ways. and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." The prodigal "came to himself," and soon "he arose and went to his father."

These leprous men said: "Why sit we here until we die?" The spirit of inquiry prompted them to take steps for their deliverance. The hopeless man is the indifferent man, the careless man; the self-satisfied man. The man in greatest danger is the man who has no realization of that danger. It's the person who has no desire for Christ that burdens my heart. I am optimistc about those who know they need Him and really want Him. The sense of sin is an encourag-

ing symptom. The physician has hope when the patient begins to crave food. "Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled." Their hunger and thirst is part of the blessing, and inseparable from the full enjoyment of it. The spirit of inquiry led these lepers to the place of food. "And they rose up in the twilight to go unto the camp of the Syrians, and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of the Syrians, behold! there was no man there"—"none to molest, none to make afraid."

2. This is a promising question, because when seriously asked, there is no doubt about the result. These lepers found all they needed. The Psalmist says, "In the day when I cried, Thou answeredst me and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul."

"Ye shall seek Me and find Me when ye shall search for Me with all your heart, and I will be found of you," saith the Lord. "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in Him a resting place,
And He has made me glad."

Remember it was a leper who said to Christ: "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." And Christ said: "I will; be thou clean."

3. This is a promising question because it opens up a sphere of usefulness. No sooner had these leprous men found food, than they felt the responsibility of making known this discovery to others who were in a perilous condition. "They said one to another, we do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace. If

we tarry until the morning light, some mischief will come upon us. Now, therefore, come that we may go and tell the king's household." Saved for service. An evidence of our own appreciation and appropriation of Christ is a desire and determination to present Him to others. What a privilege this! Your personal blessing, and then your blessing to others. You should be a Christian not simply to be saved, but that you may experience the joy of making known to others from personal experience the ample provision Christ has for all hungry souls. How much the sinner misses because he has no knowledge of spiritual blessings to impart to others! Your personal salvation is only one blessing of Christianity. In one sense, it is an incidental blessing. God's purpose for you is to do His will, and to find your delight in so doing. You have reached your possibilities on this side, only when you can say, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God!" What a transformation! Four leprous, isolated, starving men, asking the question, "Why sit we here until we die?" In God's hands, rescued from starvation and assuming the responsibility and using the privilege of bearing the glad tidings of abundant provision to the "king's household." There is a life of usefulness possible for all. "Usefulness is the true measure of living."

"When Jesus has found you
Tell others the story,
That my loving Savior
Is your Savior, too.

"Then pray that your Savior
May bring them to glory
And prayer will be answered;
'Twas answered for you."

Let me emphasize this thought; the question of responsibility is inseparable from the question of personal discovery. How ungrateful, how inexcusable these lepers would have been, if they had withheld the tidings of plenty from the others who were famine-stricken. They virtually asked after their own question had been answered, "Why sit we here until others die?" That's an imperative question: "Why sit we here until others die?" The Christ we have found as our only hope and strength is the Christ others who are starving need, and they are near us, at our doors, in our city, in our congregations, in our places of business, in our homes. If we withhold the news, what can we expect but criticism, distrust, ridicule? "This day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace!" God forbid!

> If you sit where you are until you die,
> You elect for eternity an everlasting sigh.
> The only answer to your importunate, unmitigating cry
> Will be an insistent, inexorable, unanswerable Why?

XXI

The GREAT SALVATION

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?"
—HEB. 2:3.

THE most important of all subjects demands the most serious consideration. No other subject can rival in importance the subject of Salvation. That which has to do with a man's immortal soul must transcend all problems which man is called to confront.

It is said that Massilon, in the first sermon he ever preached, challenged his congregation in these words, "If," says he, "a cause the most important that could be conceived were to be tried at the bar before qualified judges, if this cause interested ourselves in particular, if the eyes of the whole Kingdom were fixed upon the events, if the most eminent counsel were employed on both sides, and if we had heard from our infancy of this yet undetermined trial, would you not all sit with due attention and warm expectation to the pleadings on each side? Would not all your hopes and fears be hinged on the final decision? And yet, let me tell you, you have this moment a cause where not one nation, but all the world are spectators—tried not before a fallible tribunal, but before the awful throne of Heaven, where not your temporal and transitory interests are the subject of debate, but your eternal happiness, or misery—where the cause is still undetermined, but the very moment I am speaking may fix the irrevocable decree that shall last forever."

Our text denominates this Salvation great. It will not be difficult to convince any candid mind of the truth of this

statement. The exceeding greatness of this Salvation appears from a few observations.

I. This Salvation Is Great In Origin

God, the Sovereign of the Universe stands as the center and soul of the amazing plan. When there was no other eye to pity, and no other arm to save, He beheld, and He stretched forth His Almighty Hand. We have a Being of infinite power and of infinite holiness condescending for the deliverance of sinful man. Man had sinned. In the very nature of things, he became guilty before God. To countenance this sin, to let it pass unobserved would be to contradict the essential attributes of God. God cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance. It deserves His condemnation. By withholding His disapproval He would become a party to man's sin and this could never be. His law had been broken. Wherever there is law, there must be penalty. The awful situation must be met. God must be vindicated. Man must be held to strict account. How can God be just and yet a justifier? He provides a son, who in his infinite holiness, God can accept in man's stead. He can be made a propitiation for sin. He can die the "just for the unjust," and thereby bring us to God.

In studying the chapter just previous to the one in which the text is found, we may observe the exalted position the Son of God occupies. The writer shows His superiority to the Angels and gives Him the place which He has by virtue of His relation to God. His argument, according to another, is this, "Christ is the Son of God, not in the sense, in which Angels, as a class of beings, are designated by this name, but as He who has taken His seat on the right hand of the Majesty on High. The greatness of His position is proportionate to the excellency of the name of Son. This

name He has not obtained by favor, nor attained by effort, but inherited by indefeasible right. He is Son. Which of the Angels was ever so addressed? Angels are the Son's ministers. Like swift winds they convey His messages, or they carry destruction, at His bidding, like a flame of fire. But the Son is enthroned God forever. The sceptre of righteousness by whomsoever borne is the sceptre of His Kingdom. All thrones and powers, human and angelic, hold sway under Him. They are His fellows and participate only in His royal gladness, whose joy surpasses theirs." The Son is, "Very God out of very God."

This transcendent being agrees to make the sacrifice for man's redemption. From the throne of God He descends to the footstool of earth—from riches to poverty. He for whom and by whom all things were made, and to whom the Angels minister, came not to be "ministered unto but to minister." From Royal Palace to manger; from friends to enemies; from joy to sorrow; from health to pain; from crown to cross. Words are inadequate to convey the heights from which He came, and the depths into which He entered.

This Salvation was not conceived by man. It could not have been planned by him. It finds its origin in the eternal purpose of God. Divinity before which humanity must stand with bated breath, contrived the plan to save rebellious man.

"It's the Grace of God, which brings Salvation." Impossible to disassociate greatness from anything that God does, and especially from that marvelous scheme, which transforms the sinner into the saint: which is so wondrously effective as to make the pure eyes of God behold with complacency, and so change man, that to God Himself, he ap-

pears as though he had never sinned. Salvation from such a source must be denominated great.

The second remark concerning this Salvation is—

II. GREAT IN PREPARATION

We naturally expect something great for which great preparation has been made. As a rule, years of thought and struggle are necessary to the production of a great man. He represents a series of contested steps of progress. When we viewed the beautiful "White City" at Chicago, and reflected on its contents, we knew that the wisdom and the experiments of centuries, were summoned to the aid of those who made that marvelous Exposition such a stupendous success. The civilization, which we today enjoy, has not flashed upon us as a Meteor athwart the sky. It has been dearly purchased. We have come into it through carnage and disaster. God, in His inscrutable plan, has prepared the path by which it has been entered, through defeats and victories marvelous to consider.

This great country, which we are pleased to call, "The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave," was once a trackless forest, inhabited by savages. What preparations have been made to fashion it as it now greets the eye, and charms the imagination! Muscle and brain and soul have been challenged to their utmost. The same thought holds true with reference to this salvation. Man had hardly fallen when the promise was made. Yea, "The Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world." "The seed of the woman was to bruise the serpent's head." God's dealings with the Old Testament saints typified the salvation which was to come. In the offering of Isaac, we see the sacrifice of the Son of God. Joseph, sold into Egypt, and betrayed by his brethren, brings before us Him, who was

sold under sin and who was betrayed by one of His disciples for thirty pieces of silver. Moses, who was called to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage typifies that greater deliverance of Christ from the bondage of sin. The serpent lifted in the wilderness was typical of Him, who said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Me." Those who led the hosts of Israel to victory suggest the "Captain of our Salvation," who possesses every illustrious qualification to make us victorious. The sacrifices were all typical of the great sacrifice on the cross, and by the Priests, who offered them, we come to understand, "The great High Priest of our Profession." The prophets, one after another, speak in increasing clearness of Him who was to come, and finally, John the Baptist prepares the way of the Lord, and remains to point Him out in these significant words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The proof of this marvelous preparation, we have in the teachings of our Savior, Himself, when He came. He said, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Hear the wondrous words of just and devout Simeon. He was waiting for "The consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him." "It was revealed unto Him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." "He came by the spirit into the Temple. He took the child Jesus in his arms, and blessed God and said, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou has prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel!' " A Salva-

tion which is the culmination of centuries of preparation, must be great. This great Salvation, which God Himself prepared and which He revealed gradually and grandly through succeeding ages, challenges our thoughts and persuades our minds to assent to its greatness.

Once more. This Salvation—

III. Great In Execution

Christ appears. He chooses His Disciples. To them He makes known His authority as the "Anointed of God." They preach the glad tidings of Salvation. They are "despised and rejected of men." Their Leader is openly accused as an imposter. He is questioned by the representatives of His own race. The bitterness against Him increases. They determine to put Him to death. "The hour is at hand." He takes unto Himself the twelve, and says, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man, shall be accomplished." We have that pathetic scene in Gethsemane. The Saviour prays that, 'This cup might pass." We have the agony and the bloody sweat, the falling asleep of the disciples, the betrayal by one of them to the mob that comes out with swords and staves to take Him. "His disciples forsake Him, and flee." "Peter follows afar off," and finally with an oath, disowns allegiance to His Master. "They called false witnesses to testify against Him, whose witness does not agree." Pilate finds "no fault in Him." He seeks to release Him, but the people cry out, "Not this man, but Barabbas." Sentence is passed upon Him. He is spit upon and buffeted. The crown of thorns is placed upon His head, He is lead away to Calvary. They place Him on the cross between two thieves. He utters words of startling significance as His life is ebbing away. "From

the sixth until the ninth hour there is darkness over all the earth. The veil of the Temple is rent from top to bottom. The earth did quake and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints, which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection."

The Centurion and they that were with Him, watching Jesus, bear this testimony, "Truly this was the Son of God." Was any great plan ever executed with such attendant manifestations of power? Think of Him who was crucified. Think of His blood which was shed. Think of the Son of God dying the ignominous death of the cross. He had done nothing worthy of death. He was "without sin." "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." He died the "Just for the unjust"—the innocent for the guilty.

"Mamma," said a little child to her mother, when she was being put to bed at night, "Mamma, what makes your hand so scarred and twisted and unlike other people's hands?" "Well," said the mother, "My child, when you were younger than you are now, years ago, one night, after I had put you to bed, I heard a cry, a shriek, up-stairs. I came up and found the bed was on fire, and you were on fire, and I took hold of you, and I tore off the burning garments, and while I was tearing them off, and trying to get you away, I burned my hand and it has been scarred and twisted ever since, and hardly looks any more like a hand; but I got that, my child, in trying to save you." I wish "I could show you the burned hand of Christ, burned in plucking you out of the fire; burned in snatching you away from the flames. Ay, also the burned foot and the burned brow and the burned heart—burned for you." "By His stripes we are healed."

In view of this great salvation which greatness is marvelously demonstrated by its origin, preparation and execution,

how shall we escape if we neglect it? This question is put in the light of omission. Neglect means eternal loss. To refuse what is offered means that we can never come into possession. To neglect, means for us—"That Christ lived and died in vain—that He suggested nothing in all our thoughts—that He inspired nothing in all our lives—that we were not once near enough to Him to be seized with His compassion for the world." This truth finds abundant illustration. That a fence may go to destruction. It is not necessary that we should take our tools, and with ruthless hand, tear it to pieces. The same result will come to pass by neglecting to repair it. A man on the Niagara river, if he make no effort to stem the current will soon drift over the fearful Cataract and find a watery grave. To be lost it is not necessary to be a blasphemer, a drunkard, a moral wreck. Neglect brings about the same result. There are two classes in God's sight—believers and unbelievers—those who accept, and those who reject.

Faith is the instrument of Salvation.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." "He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

You are in the grip of some disease. It might be arrested, if the proper means were employed. This disease is fatal, if permitted to develop. You neglect to send for a physician. You refuse to take the warning of friends. Your neglect will result in your death, because the disease increases in malignity, and there is no possible way to escape.

A passenger train is thundering along at the rate of fifty miles an hour. Suddenly, and without warning, it comes into collision with another train, and scores are hurried into eternity. Men seek to ascertain the cause. It is discovered

that the switchman has neglected to turn the switch. And through this neglect death and sorrow have come.

How shall we escape?

We can't escape by flight.

Adam hid himself, but he was discovered. Jonah fled to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, but he had a fearful reckoning, and had to do what he had sought to escape. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there." "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness will cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."

We cannot escape by fraud. We may deceive others and ourselves, but we cannot deceive God. "Shall not God search this out, for He knoweth the secrets of the heart?" "He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth what is in the darkness and the light dwelleth with Him."

We cannot escape by resistance. You can't escape the lightning, the tide, the tornado. Neither can you escape God, "Who shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." "How shall we escape?" I answer this question by asking another. Can a man in a burning building escape from the flames if he refuse to take the ladder which is his only means of escape? Can a man in mid-ocean, struggling with the waves, escape if he refuse to take the rope which is thrown to him?

We can only escape by accepting Christ, who is the only way to God. "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." I offer you this way of escape. Jesus said, "I am the Way."

"Thou art the way, to Thee alone,
From sin and death we flee;
And he, who would the Father seek,
Must seek Him, Lord, in Thee."

XXII

The JOY *of* SALVATION

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation."—Ps. 51:12.

THIS psalm is one of contrition, confession and repentance. David, "The man after God's own heart," has sinned. He is deeply penitent. He has "Godly sorrow for sin," because he realizes that his wrong-doing is primarily against God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight."

His sorrow is further evinced by the confession: "For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me." He is conscious of his guilt, and therefore pleads for mercy. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." He would with "grief and hatred of his sins turn from them unto God with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience." The child of God may sin. David was a child of God. David sinned. This experience in his life is not to encourage us to sin. It is, however, a comfort when we do sin that we may plead the mercy of God, and find that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The prayer of David furnishes us suggestive thought for serious consideration. "Restore unto me the joy of Thy Salvation."

I. THERE IS A DIVINE SALVATION

The Word of God is full of it. The prophets one after another see the coming deliverer, and an interpretation of them, without stress, points to God's glorious provision of

grace. They culminate in Him, who was to come that man might be saved from his sins. Those Old Testament worthies died in the faith that God would raise up one for the salvation of Israel. This Salvation was wrought out by the Saviour—the Lord Jesus Christ. When He came He challenged His people to disprove the purpose of His mission. He said unto them, in substance, the Scriptures in which you claim to believe are the very ones that make incontrovertible My claim to be the Savior of the world. I am not afraid for you to throw the light of your Prophets upon my profession. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of Me." The salvation for which they looked was freely offered to them in the person and work of Christ. They gave all sorts of excuses for rejecting it. These were all grounded in prejudice. Christ gave them, what they were unwilling to confess, the real reason for their rejection of His salvation: "Ye *will* not come unto Me that ye might have life." Just and devout Simeon, in the power of the Holy Spirit, recognized in Jesus the salvation of God. He went into the Temple and took Him in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, which *Thou* hast prepared before the face of all peoples—a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel."

In this great salvation God laid under contribution all His infinite attributes. The Trinity was engaged in revealing it. The three Persons in the Godhead wrought with intense energy and matchless skill to make complete the Plan of Redemption. Yes, Salvation is a stupendous fact. "The grace of God, which brings salvation hath appeared to all men." David had this salvation. There had been

many times in his life when he rested sweetly in the smile of God's approval. He had seen, under God's guidance, the hosts of Israel victorious on many battlefields in the face of strong and hostile forces. He, himself, had been marvelously spared from the vengeance of King Saul. Many songs of thanksgiving and praise he had sung. Many souls he had inspired with a belief in the God of Israel. But we find him playing now on a minor chord. He isn't satisfied. Something is lacking. He is in darkness. God's face doesn't shine. The vision of the King is obscured. The poet gives us his sentiment in the lines—

"Where is the blessedness I knew,
When first I saw the Lord—
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus, and His Word?"

David had salvation, but in the former days he possessed more. He had sustained a great loss. What was it? The joy of that salvation. Hear his earnest prayer: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation."

II. ITS CHARACTERISTIC IS JOY

This is what David had lost. The communion with his God had been broken. The normal condition of a faithful child of God is joy. God's people do not stand as often as they should on the mountain tops of glory. They revel, to the detriment of their own soul and to the dishonor of God, too much in doubt and depression. Joy is a perfectly natural accompaniment of salvation. When it is lacking there is urgent need for careful search on the part of the child of God. He has failed in some essential. He has in some way disposed of his birthright. What was the word spoken to the Shepherds who were watching their

flocks by night? "And the angel said unto them, fear not." Why? Listen! "For behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day into the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The announcement of this salvation was coupled with joy. What was the effect upon these shepherds? "And the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen."

This joy was at the begnning of our Saviour's life. Beautifully suggestive is the record we have at the close of Christ's mission: "And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them, and it came to pass while He blessed them He was parted from them and carried up into Heaven." "And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." There was joy at the beginning and at the end of Christ's life. The same is gloriously true in the experience of every one who is a recipient of God's offered mercy, "The salvation which is in Christ Jesus."

A poor cripple is at the gate of the Temple. He is in sore need and great distress. Iife for him is sad. He enlists the compassion of Peter. The disciple commands, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." The result: "And he, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God." Human life is like this cripple, sitting just outside of the Temple, unable to enter. Jesus Christ is the Door. Through Him the soul leaps into the bosom of God. There is great joy because the soul has found its essential need, and has simply reached home. "Philip goes down to Samaria and preaches Christ unto

them." The result: "And there was great joy in that city." The proclamation of this salvation is accompanied with joy.

"Barnabas was glad when he saw the grace of God." "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The apostle exclaims, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice." "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." It is not strange that joy should be the characteristic of this salvation. It would be exceedingly strange if such salvation were not accompanied with joy. What does this salvation mean? It means Pardon, Peace, and Heaven.

Here is a condemned criminal. The law has determined his guilt. He has been for his crime sentenced to serve a term of years in prison. His freedom has been taken away. He is under condemnation. His condition is deplorable. His lot is sad to contemplate. Appeal is made for his release. The governor of the State pardons him. What a strange being he would be if joy did not possess him when he realized that his sentence was removed and he was again a free man.

We are under the condemnation of God. "He that believeth not is condemned already." The sentence of death has been passd upon all men. We make appeal for the pardoning power. This power is in the efficacy of Christ. Pardon is granted. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

Joy must follow the realization of such a glorious provision and the acceptance of such an offer.

Salvation means Peace. Two persons between whom at one time there existed the utmost confidence and the deepest affection have had a difficulty. Their blessed relationship has been disturbed. They are sad and miserable over this estrangement. A friend persuades them to make mutual concessions and forgive. There is great joy when they clasp hands again. We are in rebellion against God. We have defied His righteous rule. We have transgressed His law. The result has been a disturbance of relations. We are not reconciled. The frown of God is upon us. Christ intervenes. The Gospel is an overture of peace. We accept Him as our Mediator. Peace is made. Joy is the inevitable, the enrapturing, result.

Salvation means Heaven. Heaven is home. Years ago the world was startled by the announcement that a lovely boy had been stolen. He has never been found. He was by a ruthless hand snatched from parental care and love. If Charlie Ross, after years of wandering, had returned to that home, how could he have expressed his joy? Heaven is our home. We are pilgrims and strangers here. We are on a journey, and the human race is homesick for Heaven. Sin has ruthlessly snatched us from a Father's love and care. Salvation means a return to the "home of the soul." The very mention of our return gives ecstasy to our souls.

"Though yet an exile here I roam,
That distant home by faith I see."

This prospect is linked with joy. "We rejoice and are exceeding glad because great is our reward in Heaven." Yes, the characteristic of this Salvation is joy. Something is radically wrong when we have lost the natural accompaniment of our deliverance. But the passage teaches such a condition.

III. THIS JOY MAY BE INTERRUPTED

David's prayer is, "Restore unto me the joy of Thy Salvation." He hadn't lost the salvation, but he had lost the joy of it. There is one thing greater than Salvation, and that is the joy of Salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Acceptance of Christ is not the end; it is only the beginning. Faith is the foundation on which the beautiful superstructure it to be built. It is the soil from which the graces must grow. It is the point from which our bearings are to be taken. It is the entrance to the sheepfold. It introduces to the Shepherd. It puts the feet into the path "that shines more and more unto the perfect day." Faith puts us in a position where we may command the blessings of the Kingdom. Faith is like the ticket we gave to the keeper of the gate at the World's Fair. When the keeper received that ticket the privileges of the grounds were ours. We could appropriate if we desired. We might, however, have gotten on the inside and taken our seat near the gate and refused to make an "abundant entrance" into the beauty and bountifulness of that marvelous exposition. Yes, we may have the salvation without always entering into the joys of it. But, mark you, it is our fault if that joy is interrupted.

IV. HOW MAY THE JOY OF SALVATION BE INTERRUPTED?

1. *By Neglect.* We must do certain things if our joy is to be continuous and permanent. We must use God's means of grace. This joy may be interrupted:

(a) By neglect of God's Word. When we do this we become weak. When we become weak we can't see things as they are. The hungry man needs food. He isn't satis-

fied until he gets it. What food is to the natural hunger, God's Word is to the hunger of the soul. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." You can't be always joyous when your health is poor. You can't be always joyous in the spiritual life when your spiritual health is impaired by neglecting to feed upon the Word.

(b) By neglect of prayer. Our Saviour was a man of prayer. He spent hours in prayer. God wants us in constant touch with Him. Your beloved companion wants with you daily interchange of thought and speech. Neglect for one single day to confer with each other and there is a broken communion. Each day we have our obligations to discharge. God is jealous of our requests. He guides, if we ask. We will lose our joy if we consult Him not.

(c) By neglect of the Sanctuary. Special means of grace are there used. "The way, O God, is in the sanctuary." The ordinances of His house have His divine approval. It is the place where His honor dwelleth. As a professing Christian you can't absent yourself from the services without interrupting your joy. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together."

(d) By neglect of fellowship. We are one in Christ Jesus. There can be no division without interrupted joy. "We are members of His body." "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." If we are not in full sympathy with every child of God our joy may be interrupted. If we are out of fellowship with one of God's children we are out of fellowship with Him. We are to love one another as Christ has loved us.

(e) By neglect of service. Service is the measure of our loyalty. We are chosen to be unremitting toilers. The

indolent man can't be a happy man. The unprofitable servant finds his place in "outer darkness." In that "outer darkness" there is no "light." Christ is not there. Where He is not, there can be no joy. The consciousness of duty done gives us the joy. Paul was exultant because he could say, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course." Christ was full of joy because "He went about doing good," and when His mission closed He could say, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

This joy may be interrupted—

2. *By Commiting Sin.* This was David's trouble. He had sinned. Will we ever learn that God hates sin; that sin separates from Him?

The moment we sin we break the communion with God. There is no sadder separation than this. Sad indeed, this awful realization: though I am a professing Christian, I am out of communion with God. Do you stand there today? See that dear child, heartbroken, refusing to be comforted. He or she has sinned against the mother. That mother is grieved. That child cannot be relieved until the mother says: "My child, you have my forgiveness." David was just like that child. He was a child, but he had wronged his God—his Father. A child out of communion. Sadder than almost any conceivable condition. It grieves a little child much more to be out of communion with its own mother than to have the displeasure of some one who is nothing to it by the ties of love. It ought to grieve you, if you are God's child, to be out of communion with Him more than if you had never professed Him as your Father in Jesus Christ. It grieved David. He was doubly grieved

because he was God's child, and because he had offended a loving Father. If you are where David was, you must feel the enormity of your sin before you can truly repent and be restored to His favor. I thank God that restoration may take place.

V. MEANS FOR ITS RESTORATION

Joy may again fill the soul. How? By taking up the thread where it was broken and getting back where you left off. Have you neglected His Word? Study it diligently. Make it a "Lamp unto your feet." Feed upon its precious promises. Have you neglected prayer? Enter daily into the secret place—"shut the door." "Pray to thy Father which seeth in secret and he will reward thee openly." Have you neglected the ordinances of God's house? Attend the services. Enter into the spirit of the worship. Come to the table of the Lord. Own Him as your atoning sacrifice. Are you out of fellowship with any of His children? Be reconciled to your brother, and then offer your gift. Don't ask God to accept you or your service until you are reconciled. "God is not mocked." Have you been an idler in His vineyard? Have you proved yourself an unprofitable servant? Take up your work. Gird yourself for the toil. "Labor on till the close of day." Have you sinned? Is there anything in your life inconsistent with your profession? How will you be restored? Just like David. By contrition, confession and repentance. This will have to come if you ever get back. Why not now? You can't afford to stay away. Resolve with Esther, "I will go in to the king, and if I perish, I perish." I would rather perish than to neglect what I am constrained ought to be done.

Once more. I call your attention to

VI. THE IMPORTANT PRACTICAL PURPOSE OF THE RESTORATION OF THIS JOY

Listen! "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit, then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." David, without the joy of God's salvation, was powerless. A child of God in his condition usually has little desire to serve the Master, but a more lamentable thought than this. Though he have the desire, he is unable to perform. In this condition we may ourselves be "saved so as by fire." But our works are destroyed. The saved man out of communion with God may make out of those he seeks to help "wood and hay and stubble." His work is worthless to himself, to his fellowmen, and to God. He can't make "gold and silver and precious stones."

"Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." What solemn words! We are blessed with Salvation that we may save others. David had Salvation, but he had lost the joy of it. He was grieved because he knew that without this joy he was useless in leading others to Christ. How many say I will be satisfied if I get to heaven! This is the very essence of selfishness. I don't believe that God will ever reward such a selfish ambition. And we are robbing God of His glory, men of what they reasonably expect of us, and ourselves of our great reward, when we are content to be saved "so as by fire." Such, however, will be the

logical result if we are without the joy of God's salvation. This is one secret of failure in the Church of God. Individual members are out of communion with God. They are out of touch with the Powerhouse. The circuit isn't complete. The pipe from God's great Reservoir that conveys to His children is hindered by some neglect or by some sin.

We are prone to throw our responsibility upon God. We are very fond of saying, "I will do the best that I can and leave the results with God." This, I fear, is a sentiment sometimes encouraged by the evil one. There is a true sense in which the results are with us. If we are trying to serve God without the joy of Salvation, we are attempting the impossible. If we have not that joy, we are responsible for its absence. There is neglect or sin in our lives, and, like David, we are to go to God to get rid of it.

"The joy of the Lord is your strength." It is our strength for service, for endurance, for suffering, for witness-bearing, for soul-winning. We are bound to have results if we have the joy of the Lord's Salvation. If we haven't results it is because we haven't the joy. If we haven't the joy we are responsible for the absence of results, and not God. Notice the language: "Restore unto me the joy of Thy Salvation; then *will* I teach transgressors Thy ways and sinners *shall* be converted unto Thee." There was no doubt in David's mind. On the recovery of this joy, David would do a certain thing: "Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways." On the recovery of this joy, David would see a certain result: "Sinners shall be converted unto thee." This same thought we find in another Psalm: "I waited patiently for the Lord and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my

mouth, even praise unto our God." The result: "Many *shall* see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." When God's child is in the place of privilege, in communion with Him, there is *light* in his life, "Many shall *see* it." There is *power* in his life, "and *fear.*" There is *influence* in his life. "And shall *trust* in the Lord." If we are in touch with God, as we ought to be, as we may be, we are going to do and see what Davd did and saw. It is as certain to take place as the heat from the sun, as the rain from the cloud, as the smoke from the fire, as the acorn from the oak. Loved ones will be taught God's ways and will be converted. Children will seek and find Christ. Unconverted men and women will be saved. God is always prepared. The preparation needed is on our part. God is willing. Are we? Are we vessels that He can use? If the Church does not accomplish for God, fearful will be the responsibility of her members. If children and other loved ones and friends are not saved, God is not to be censured.

If we have lost the joy of Salvation we may have it restored. With the restoration of this joy will come the desire and the ability for acceptable and effective service. Joy in the heart means power in the life. Conscious of our own acceptance, "In the Beloved," like Peter, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

I don't ask if you have accepted Christ. I hope you have. I don't ask if you have Salvation. What I ask is this: Have you the joy of salvation? Have you not simply the desire "to teach transgressors" and to be used in the conversion of sinners, but have you the ability? Are you fitted for use? "Character is the condition for service." If you are not "in the secret of His presence" it is useless for you to try to get others there. If there is any sin in your life un-

forgiven, the life of God is not flowing through you to others.

I fear that many of God's children today stand in need of an answer to the prayer of David: "Restore unto me the joy of Thy Salvation, then will I teach trangressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee."

XXIII

SUFFERING *and* GLORIFICATION

"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

The ultimate purpose of God's redemptive scheme is that we may be "conformed to the image of His son."

In this attainment consists man's highest dignity and greatest felicity. What can animate us if such a prospect as this fails to arouse all the energies of the soul? To be like Christ is indeed, "a consummation devoutly to be wished." He is the one perfect model—the one faultless ideal. He is the only one "altogether lovely." One is pleased when told by a friend that he reminds him of a beautiful character in whom he finds so much to admire. A son who has a noble father is delighted when told by one of his father's admirers that he is growing more like his father every day. A daughter whose mother is lovely in character rejoices that she is admired because of the likeness to that mother. But beyond all this, should we feel grateful to God that men and women take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus; that they see in our countenances the joy of His Salvation, and observe in our conduct the evidences of association with Him.

God has graciously undertaken to restore the image we have lost by sin.

So great is His love for us that He yearns to conform us to Christ's image and thereby confer on us a blessing which is beyond all compare. O, that we might more fully comprehend the surprising and surpassing purpose that God seeks to accomplish with our every life! God is able to so

fashion us that we resemble the children of a King—and that King is His own Son. Gradually, but surely, such is to be the end of our union with Christ.

"We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Since this realization is to be ours, need we wonder that we should be called to partake in the fellowship of His sufferings? The passage combines the two thoughts—suffering and glorification. I. "The believer must suffer with Christ," and then, II. "They shall be glorified together."

I. "THE BELIEVER MUST SUFFER WITH CHRIST"

If you ask why this is true, I may not be able to answer. But this much is certain, the end justifies the means. All real glory costs real suffering. Everything has its price, and we can't get it unless that price is paid. The joy of possession is enhanced beyond measure by the remembrance of what was endured in securing that which we have. Physical manhood is appreciated in proportion to the exercise and the care necessary to its attainment. Intellectual vigor is valued in the light of stern mental discipline and persistent application. Moral courage is measured by the strength of the enemy and the peril of the situation. Christian character is really discerned in the light of duty done, obstacles overcome, suffering endured. We know not what we really have until we ascertain what the possession has cost. That which costs us little is cheaply valued. That which costs us much is highly valued. That which costs us real suffering is valued beyond expression. Christ values His own because He has purchased them with His own precious blood. When we are glorified with Him, and He has us in His eternal presence at God's right hand, He will then see of the "travail of His soul and be satisfied." When we are in our Father's House we will greatly rejoice, because we

started to it such a long distance from home. When we sit down in the Kingdom of God we shall sweetly rest, because we shall be so tired. We will know what it is to be glorified together, because we have suffered with Him."

"If so be that we suffer with Him." It is said, "The Mexicans say to their new-born offspring, 'Child, thou art come unto the world to suffer. Endure and hold thy peace.' " God's children suffer in common with all men the ills to which humanity is heir. To say he is a human being is to say he is a suffering being.

The Christian, however, has sufferings of a peculiar character—sufferings imposed by the very position he occupies, and the very profession he makes. Jesus Christ challenged suffering by the mission on which He came. The stand He took for truth and righteousness made Him the object of scorn, contempt and unjust treatment. We, as His disciples, make the same challenge. The declaration of allegiance to Him is our invitation to the enemies of Christianity to impose upon us their worst. "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord." The disciples who accepted Christ's teaching and went forth in His name, suffered much that they would have escaped if they had refused to preach His Gospel and testify of Him.

They were ridiculed. Some of them were put to cruel death. Paul suffered the loss of all things that he might win Christ and be found in Him. Discipleship means self-denial, cross-bearing, following after the Master.

The authorities didn't cease their enmity to Christ until they crucified Him. Many of God's children have fed the flames lighted by the cruel adherents of false religions. In this day, men and women are suffering loss for Christ—laying down their lives for His sake. We might as well understand that, from first to last, discipleship involves suffering.

"It is through much tribulation that we must enter into the Kingdom of God." When John saw the countless hosts before the Throne of God, one of the elders said unto him as though distinguishing them by the marks of suffering, "These are they which came out of great tribulation."

But I am so glad that the text gives a peculiar dignity to Christian suffering, and crowns it with a glory that not only makes it necessary, but even desirable. The believer has a blessed fellowship in suffering. If so be that we suffer *with him—with Christ.* Suffering, for the child of God, bears a new and glorious aspect. It is differentiated from all other suffering by this consideration: The believer suffers with Christ. This thought is all important. It is not the believer who suffers, but the believer who suffers *with* Christ, in Christ's spirit and to Christ's glory.

To suffer with Christ means also that we do not suffer alone. He is our companion in suffering. We may even have Him in fellowship with us. Suffering is a part of our partnership with Him. We serve with Him: we rejoice with Him. We love with Him. We die with Him. We are risen with Him. We suffer with Him. Suffering can't be useless *with* Him. It can't be wrong with Him. It can't be a happening with Him. It must be a blessed provision in the economy of grace. Paul recognized this when he said (endeavoring to express the one all-absorbing purpose of his life): "That I may know Him and the fellowship of His sufferings." If you are truly a believer in Christ, when you suffer, you suffer with Him. He is with you in the blessed fellowship of suffering. You are getting lessons in this fellowship that you can't learn elsewhere.

Now, if you suffer with Christ, you bear your sufferings for Christ's sake. You suffer because He suffered. By suffering do you prove your faith in, and love for, Him. In

what way can a mother best prove her love for her child? By suffering for the child, by spending sleepless nights and wearisome days that the child may be restored to health, or developed into noble manhood and beautiful womanhood. How best does a devoted wife prove her faith in, and love for, her husband? By enduring poverty with him; by suffering persecution with him; by bearing hardships with him. So do Christ's followers best prove their faith in, and love for, Him by suffering for His sake.

The believer also suffers in Christ's spirit. We need not believe that we are suffering with Christ unless we endure in the spirit that characterized his sufferings. To do this, we must have His Spirit within. We suffer our trials and sorrows, not as men and women of the world, but as the children of God and the followers of Christ. To suffer with Christ means that we view our sufferings as Christ viewed His; that we bear our cross as Christ bore His. This He did patiently, resignedly, prayerfully, triumphantly. He said: "Not My will, but Thine, be done." "If ye endure chastening," if you accept it in the proper spirit, God deals with you as sons. The mere fact that we suffer isn't anything in itself. Suffering may drive us from God. It may make us rebellious. We are suffering with Christ when we suffer in His spirit, when we accept our sufferings from a loving Father, and know that "He doeth all things well."

Then to suffer with Christ, we must suffer to Christ's glory. The object and aim of the believer's suffering is that the Saviour may be honored. The men who have gone out in obedience to their country's call, who have fought by land and sea, who have suffered privation, hunger and death, have added to American history, and to the valor of American arms. A true soldier will die in defense of his country's honor. A true soldier of Christ will endure hardness for

His Leader's glory. The great purpose of our every life is not that we may magnify ourselves, but that Christ may be magnified in us—not that we may have the glory of our suffering, but that Christ may have it. We are to suffer, not that we may be glorified, but we are to suffer for Christ, in His spirit, and to His glory, that He may be glorified.

It is in this spirit that we must suffer, if we are ever glorified.

Our reward shall be in keeping with our endurance. Our glorification must be proportionate to our humiliation.

To all who suffer with Christ, there must be a glorification with Him. To the patient sufferer there is, there can be but one termination—glory at God's right hand. "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

This brings us to the enrapturing prospect the passage indicates.

II. "WE SHALL BE GLORIFIED TOGETHER"

This means that the glad day is surely coming when the believer "shall be exalted, dignified, enriched, amply rewarded and eternally blessed." Everything points to this. Human life can be explained only in the light of life beyond. Suffering for Christ is justified in the prospect of eternal glorificaton in brighter skies. Reaping always follows sowing. The dying grain of wheat ushers in an abundant harvest when all the conditions have been met, when the means have been used, and the time appointed has come.

The marble statue stands as a perfect model when the chisel has done its destructive and constructive work. The painting charms the soul when the artist has laid down his brush. The palace stands forth in magnificent proportions when the workmen have used the materials, and the tools have been laid aside.

When God's child has suffered His will, when the means of grace have been diligently used, the great Architect says: "The work is done, the stone is polished, put it in the 'house not made with hands.' The picture is finished; let it hang in the celestial gallery."

The sun sets to rise again. The morning dawns when the night is ended. The trees put forth their verdant beauty when the winter ceases. The eagle soars to his native mountain when the cage is unbarred. The night of death ushers in the eternal morning. Resurrection follows the crucifixion, and ascension glory follows the resurrection.

The believer has entered into union with Christ and he must share in his endless glorification. We suffer with Him: we are glorified together. We shall "have a share in His glory and shall be glorified as He is glorified." What we have is His, and what He has is ours. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. The inheritance is His. He is our Elder Brother. We share with Him the Father's vast expanse of glory.

1. "The perfect approval of the Father." "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

2. "Glorious resurrection bodies." "Fashioned like unto His glorious body."

3. "Exaltation to God's right hand." "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

4. "Enthronement with Christ." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."

5. "Fullness of divine pleasure." "I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of this vine, until I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom."

6. "Shining in the Father's Kingdom forever." "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." "Kings and priests unto God and His Father."

Are you unwilling to suffer with Him? You can't get His glory unless you partake of His sufferings. Heaven, like everything worth having, lies beyond a battlefield.

Glory can't be obtained apart from Christ. God gives through Christ, and by accepting Christ, do we become sharers with Him. We are disinherited if we are not in Him, because the inheritance is His, and it is shared only with those who are one with Him in the Father's love.

Dear Christian, will you not suffer joyfully with Christ? Will you not live in the anticipation of future glorification? Cling to the cross. "If so be that we suffer with Him."

"Only a little more climbing,
And then the heights are won,
And rest we have longed and toiled for,
Is ours, and labor done.

"Only a heart that trusteth,
The promise of rest to be,
With never a doubt of the Heaven
Our blind eyes cannot see.

"Only a faith unfailing,
Like that of a little child,
And the day will not seem dreary,
Although the way is wild.

"Only a little sorrow,
Before the end of tears—
Only an earthly morrow,
And then Heaven's happy years."

XXIV

THE HEAVENLY ENROLLMENT

"Written in Heaven."—Luke 10:20; Heb. 12:23.

Immortality is the reasonable response to the insistent aspiration of the soul. Spiritual realities loom in impressive grandeur above all human achievement. Supreme enjoyments man cannot purchase, neither can he attain unto them in his own strength.

Some things are too precious for barter. Their greatness is measured by their freeness. Their value consists in their superiority to earthly standards. The Sun that shines is the very life of the universe, and there is no price demanded for his generous benedictions.

Love is the greatest thing in the world. You cannot buy a mother's love. With this thought in mind, what light is thrown upon the relation of Christ to those who are the objects of His love. What folly to discount Salvation because of its freeness! Salvation is not a commodity dispensed in response to any price that man is either able or willing to pay. "We are redeemed not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ."

The glory of Salvation consists in its remoteness from human standards; in its superiority to human values. Christ commissioned the seventy to go forth to preach the gospel, and gave them power to work miracles. They were elated because devils were subject to them. But Christ said to them, "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

If our names are not "written in Heaven" whatever joy we may have is temporal and deceptive. If they are written there, even our sorrows and our disappointments serve to emphasize the source of our comfort, and to define the certainty of our hope.

Christ said to His disciples, "Your names are written in Heaven," and the writer to the Hebrews uses this language, "To the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn which are written in Heaven." The Scriptures suggest

THE HEAVENLY ENROLLMENT

How beautifully they emphasize the oneness of those who are Christ's on earth and those who are in Heaven. In the first passage Christ says to His disciples here in the flesh, in the sound of his voice, "Rejoice because your names are written in Heaven." And the second passage refers to those in the heavenly world, "The General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in Heaven." How sweet to know that if we are Christ's our names are *now* "written in Heaven." How sweet to think of those who have gone from us trusting in Christ that their names are "written in Heaven." "Part have crossed the flood and part are crossing now."

"Written in Heaven." This language is suggestive. No name goes down on the heavenly record except that name be authorized. What constitutes the right? Something makes a radical difference between those whose names are written and those whose names are not written in the "Book of Life." Is it because God loves some better than others? No. Is it because some are naturally better than others? No. What, then?

There is a precious old Book called the Family Bible. Whose names are written therein? The children born to

those parents. They have a right to the record of their names on that sacred page. So those who have been born of the Spirit and adopted into the family of God, the "Household of Faith" may be—must be, are, recorded in Heaven. The right is theirs because they are Christ's by purchase, by adoption, by their own voluntary acceptance. They have met the conditions of Salvation and therefore are heirs of the Kingdom.

"Written in Heaven" also suggests personal identiy and recognition. Those we love are not lost in Heaven. *Your* names are "written in Heaven." John, Peter, James, Paul. "He knoweth His own sheep by name." The "white stone" and the "new name" are God's recognition of individuality. We look forward to the re-union on the other side and certainly the name written there suggests God's preservation of the individual. "Heaven is presented to us under the idea of a Banquet. Much of its comfort must flow from a knowledge of the guests. Sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, you will intuitively recognize as your companions those who were the excellent of the earth and be re-united to those who divided your cares and doubled your joys in this world of mingled sorrows and delights."

"We shall know as we are known,
Nevermore to walk alone;
In the dawning of the morning
Of that bright and happy day
We shall know each other better
When the mists have rolled away."

"Written in Heaven" also suggests works preserved and continued. The present and future are inseparable from the past. Our country has come to her present position of commanding influence through the centuries. Thousands who

have died are potential forces in our laws and morals. So with the child of God. Paul, Spurgeon, Moody are living today. Influence survives. Our sainted loved ones are living. Greater works we have been able to do, because they have gone to their Father.

We mourn what we term their untimely death. We forget that the eternal years of God are theirs. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation"? God uses some in the earthly sphere and some in the heavenly sphere. Heaven is a promotion. But both here and there "His servants serve Him." Those who are there encourage those who are here. We are strengthened by the celestial allies as was Elisha on the plains of Dothan.

"Written in Heaven" suggests the writer. The finger of God which wrote the commandments on tables of stone doubtless records our names in the "Lamb's Book of Life." How precious that name to him who registers it! Again we go to the family Bible. We turn to the page where the names of the children are recorded. The tears trickle down our cheeks. We think of the hand of our sainted father. With what inexpressible joy he wrote the date of our birth! So in that "Book of Life" "Our Father which art in Heaven" writes the very date of our spiritual birth. There is "joy in the presence of the angels of God" as the name is inscribed.

> "I once was an outcast stranger on earth,
> A sinner by choice—an alien by birth;
> But I've been adopted—my name's written down
> An heir to a mansion, a robe and a crown."

Who has the authority to go to the family Bible and erase the name written there? Who shall erase your name

recorded in Heaven? "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?"

Once written—forever written. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any one be able to pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." "I and my Father are one."

Your name is either written in Heaven, or it is not written there. If not written there, it is written permanently nowhere. If written there, it shall remain. "The name of the wicked shall rot." "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

"Is my name written there?
On the page white and fair,
In the book of Thy Kingdom,
Is my name written there?"

XXV

AN IDEAL THAT SATISFIES

"I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."
PSALMS 17:15.

THESE words are the heavenly music of an enraptured soul. They strike the note of assurance in the midst of so much that baffles and disappoints. They suggest paid-up insurance, participating in surplus accumulations and dividends to our eternal credit, guaranteed by the infinite resources of the "Riches of God's grace and glory." They furnish adequate explanation of problems that human mind cannot solve. They voice the sentiment of the storm-tossed mariner as he sights the port for which, with mingled hope and fear, he has been steadily steering.

They flash the vision of the soul in a moment of prophetic ecstacy. David stands on the mountain summit above the mists of earth and commands an unhindered prospect.

It is sunrise in the warrior's soul. The night has ended. The eternal morning has dawned. The day of rejoicing has come. The goal has been reached.

The toiler is at home—"Heaven's morning breaks." The cross is exchanged for the crown. He is satisfied.

It is well for us to cherish in our hearts the comfort that the future so bountifully bestows.

Life depends upon the breadth of our conception. The best of it is yet to be for those who are God's trusting children. The Psalm in which these words are found discloses two Davids, or David in two aspects. We find him in contemplation of his enemies—distressed over their persecution of

himself. He makes his appeal to God. "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him."

Then there is a great calm.

David realizes that God's accounts are not settled in time; that the wicked often seem to prosper and the righteous seem to be forsaken. Then the superior condition of the righteous in the future satisfies his disturbed mind. Those who are plotting against him are "men of the world, which have their portion in this life," and he against whom their anger is directed has the blessed "Hope which anchors the soul." "As for me I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

David here strikes the note of assurance concerning a condition, which is a universal desire. The one thing for which humanity perpetually seeks is satisfaction. All, unfortunately, do not rest their hopes of attaining it on the same basis, which the Psalmist does.

These words suggest, An Ideal that satisfies, and involved in this, are, Aspiration, Anticipation, Consolation and Coronation.

I. ASPIRATION

David knew he had a soul. Better still, he could say, I have a body. I am a soul.

He had heard the voice of God in early life. He recognized the supremacy of the spiritual man. He wisely put first things, first. Though, at times, he seemed to go down under the assaults of sin, he would exclaim, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Hope thou in God."

The trend of his life was toward God. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand."

David sets for us, in this beautiful text, an ideal. The only way to reach it is to have it imprinted on the soul. We agree with him as to the desirableness of attainment. To be satisfied is our every aspiration, more, or less cherished, but so many miss the end, because they do not enter with determination on the way. Generally speaking, we attain, in some measure, what we seek.

We can rise no higher than our conception of life. We build as we plan. We must have the heavenly vision in order to the heavenly attainment. Our realization is apt to be commensurate with our aspiration.

Men seem to differ as to what constitutes satisfaction. Theoretically, they are nearer together than they are practically. They admit that "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." But so many make their chief end to glorify themselves, and then hope, in some vague way, "to enjoy God forever."

I hope to prove that some things to which men aspire, and in which they seek satisfaction, do not, and cannot furnish it. Nothing can satisfy beyond its own inherent power. There is a limit beyond which it cannot go.

1. *Some seek satisfaction in Knowledge.* Knowledge is a good thing to have, but it is only relative. Solomon, the wisest man, said, "All is vanity." The scientist can only go so far and no farther.

He pursues to his limit and then is dissatisfied. Then too, he fails to find personal and complete satisfaction because some other man has gone beyond him in results, and the honors he had hoped to reap, have been gained by another. The Bible says, "Whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." Some one has said, "Science has planted its theodolite for a measurement of the eternal and pitched its crucible for an analysis of the soul."

Science can tell us something of the manifestations of life, but the hidden secrets of these manifestations science does not and cannot disclose.

The life we all need, spiritual and eternal life, is *revealed* to us in the Bible, and is "Hid with Christ in God." "In Him was life: and the life was the light of men." "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." Jesus said, "I *give* unto them eternal life." Paul says, "The *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Not by searching, but by trusting do we come to know God.

Scientific knowledge may be valuable, but the knowledge of God's will should be our supreme concern.

Revelation is more important than investigation. We are to be judged "Out of those things, which were written in the books." Some one has said, "Naked knowledge will be as unserviceable to the soul in a dying day, as a painted fire would be to the frozen body on a cold day." "As some articles are tanned by the same sun in which others are whitened, so are some professors hardened under the same Gospel by which others are softened." "As it is lost labor to smite the flint, if it propagate no sparks, so it is fruitless toil to furnish our heads with light, if it refine not our hearts." "Satan may as well put out our eyes that we should not see the truth as cut off our feet that we should not walk in the truth." "Naked knowledge may make the head giddy, but it never makes the heart holy."

"Study to show thyself approved unto God."

2. *Some seek satisfaction in Riches.* I believe, with many, dissatisfaction begins when accumulation begins. The greed for gain gnaws at the soul with persistent and ever-increasing intensity. When a man gets in the class of those

who are worth thousands, he bends his energies for millions, and so his ambition and his desire are relentless. The Bible says, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." Money does not bring happiness.

"Some years ago there died in London a merchant, who having started as a poor boy, was worth millions of money. He might as well have been worth only a few hundreds, for he got it into his head that he was a very poor man, who had to work for his living, and the only way to pacify him was to dole him out weekly wages as a gardener. No doubt he started in life with a great desire for money, and he got his desire, but what satisfaction did it give him?" "He that loveth silver, shall not be *satisfied* with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity." "For in one hour so great riches is come to naught." "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."

Why not be a spiritual millionaire? Make sure of "The true riches."

Be "Rich toward God." Revel in "The exceeding riches of His grace."

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven."

3. *Some seek satisfaction in Pleasure.* The senses dominate. The lower nature is in the ascendency.

"Here he lies, who was so many years, but lived but seven," was the suggestive inscription on the tomb of Similis. "She that liveth in pleasure," says the sacred writer, "is dead while she liveth."

"Let my example warn you of the fatal error into which I have fallen," said the gay Sir Francis Delaval near the end of his life. "Pursue what is useful, pursue what is useful." "The pleasures of sense will surfeit and not satisfy. The pleasures of religion will satisfy, but not surfeit."

4. *Some seek satisfaction in Power.* Alexander was not satisfied with conquering the world. He sighed for other worlds to conquer. The armies of Napoleon struck terror to the heart of all Europe, and for a time he was monarch of all he surveyed, but he died a powerless prisoner, on the lonely billowy-dashed Island of St. Helena.

5. *Some seek satisfaction in Position.* They think if they could secure this, or that position in the world of finance, or literature, or politics that they would be satisfied. But the experience of others plays havoc with their dreams.

None of these things have in them more than momentary satisfaction and such is the nature of the gratification that its realization is a grevious disappointment. Our aspiration should be for something that our higher nature demands as a response to our inmost longings. Made in the image of God, nothing less than the restoration of that image can and does satisfy.

How strange that so many, after years of cumulative disappointment on the part of those who have preceded them, expressed in terms that we cannot deny, continue the same old course until life is virtually wasted, and then are forced to record the same sad experience.

Your aspiration for yourself and your children must determine, in large measure, the nature of the enjoyment you seek. How many parents rise no higher in desire for their children than that they be accomplished from a human standpoint!

The soul, which is the seat of genuine culture, and enduring blessedness, is, in many instances, lamentably neglected. Line upon line is given them with reference to their appearance in social life, their success in commercial and educational affairs, and so few words are spoken relative to their eternal salvation. How few, comparatively, the parents, who long for their sons and daughters to be considered above all else, consecrated Christians, who fervently pray that God will call their boys to preach the everlasting Gospel and make their daughters bright and shining lights in the Church of God. David's aspiration was likeness to Christ. If you are seeking to be satisfied with any attainment short of this, you will find how worse than vain will be your effort. The ashes of sad memories will be your portion. God, who made the soul, alone can satisfy the aspiration, He there implanted.

II. Anticipation

Aspiration and anticipation are closely related. Aspiration is enhanced by anticipation and anticipation is heightened by aspiration. We may reasonably anticipate the thing to which we aspire.

The text contains the thought of anticipation. David looked forward. Expectation was an ever-present incentive. The powers of the world to come were regnant in his soul.

Anticipation plays a real and prominent part in our lives. If this were not true, much of the joy of life would not be experienced. Life is really made up of what two words involve—anticipation and realization. I am of the opinion that these will constitute our pleasure in the land of perpetual bliss.

Anticipation is looking out and expecting something, really, or imaginarily good in the future. Anticipation is to the soul what oxygen is to the body. Take this out of life, and you have subtracted an essential element.

The business man anticipates a prosperous season. Parents anticipate from their children. They look forward to what they will be and do. The hope they entertain gives them strength and courage in the present.

In every phase of life the future is necessarily a potent factor in the present. Such is the case with the teacher and the pupil. "We sow in hope." The fruits of our labor we should keep in mind. David anticipated likeness to Christ, and this anticipation served him in the hour of trial, in the season of disappointment, and in the day of adversity. Anticipation is the product of faith and hope.

It is hope based on faith, and both rest on the sure promises of God. "Anticipation is like the spring in a watch. It sets all the wheels of the soul in motion." "Anticipation of a crop makes the husbandman sow the seed. Anticipation of victory makes the soldier fight. Anticipation of glory constrains the Christian to pursue glory." Anticipation of likeness of Christ makes us aspire to be conformed to His image.

III. CONSOLATION

In the text we also find the sure and never-failing source of consolation. A time coming when what we do not understand here, will be made clear. "Our consolation aboundeth by Christ." David was often in trouble. He had many sorrows. We hear him say, "I had fainted unless I had believed." There is no life that does not feel the need of comfort. When burdens are so heavy that we almost sink beneath them, what consolation that we will not have them

to bear always: The end will come. The sorrows that cause our hearts to ache, and our tears to flow are only for a season. "Our light afflictions are but for a moment." The thousands who have gone before us had their share, and were comforted in the thought of the future glory.

No matter how dark the day, the sun will shine again. Many cherished ambitions here are never realized. In eternity there will be time enough for God's children to enjoy their investments in the afflictions of earth. The perpetual dividends will be "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Loved ones have moved on one by one. Our consolation is that they are in the hands of a just and merciful God.

Our disappointments are keen. We are dissatisfied with what the world offers for our services. Those who forget God, seem to fare better, in some respects, than we. That in which they find their chief delight, God mercifully withholds from us that we may cling to what he offers for our gratification.

Our consolation—it will all come right in God's appointed time. Never mind what others may think and say, and do. The comfort that assures, the consolation that suffices—"As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

IV. Coronation

Everything has its crown. That crown is the best of which it is capable. A seed is placed in the soil. It grows and blooms and comes to fruitage. Its perfection in fruit is its crown. It serves its purpose in the fruit borne. We might linger on this thought and multiply illustrations.

The Christian's coronation will be his perfection in Christ. "Ye are complete in Him." Our crown of glory will be our likeness to Christ.

The consummation of God's matchless plan is disclosed in two statements of Scripture. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied," and, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

Neither is possible without the other, and both are certain.

If all things in the material world prove their purpose and disclose their beauty—how much more the Christian!

God's work cannot come to naught. "That far-off divine event toward which the whole creation moves," draws nearer and nearer, and in this assurance we may increasingly exult as we aspire to and anticipate the grand outcome and purpose of all redemption.

Faith will be changed into sight and hope into fruition. This is our consolation, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the statue of the fulness of Christ."

This marvelous world demonstrates to us the wisdom and power of God in Creation. In Redemption, He cannot fall short. The crowning day must come. It is bound to come. It is inevitable.

David says, "I shall be satisfied." Mark the ring of certainty, not I hope to be, not I may be, but "I *shall* be." Mark the personal element. *I*—David—the shepherd boy—the sweet singer—the King of Israel. The coronation of the individual. Paul said, "There is laid up for *me* a crown of righteousness." "For *me,*" for *you*. "For *all* who love His appearing." There is only one possible conclusion to the Christian life, and that is—Heaven. Heaven

is Coronation. Coronation is likeness to Christ. Likeness to Christ is satisfaction.

Aspiration to begin with, coronation to end with. This is the demand of logic. This is supremely reasonable. Any other conclusion would be an anti-climax.

My very aspiration for Heaven is a strong argument for the reality of Heaven. There is no sense for which provision is not made. There is no appetite that cannot be gratified. These frail, perishable bodies, God has provided for their need and desire. Is it conceivable that He has done less for the soul? The soul demands Heaven. The soul exacts holiness. The soul clamors for an endless life. The soul augurs immortality. "God never made the fish without the water for it to swim in. He never made the bird without the atmosphere for it to fly in. He never made the wild animal without the forest for it to roam in. He never made the soul with immortal longings without the Heaven to satisfy them." David's soul prompted and sanctioned his declaration. The redeemed soul shouts, Coronation! God's Heaven responds—Amen! Heaven is the amen of the Christian soul. "Christ in you the hope of glory." "God with us is in Heaven God for us:" "Lord, Lord, open unto us."

But, will He receive me then? That question must be answered by another. Do you receive Him now.

Heaven must be in us before we die, if we are to be in Heaven after we die. "When the roll is called up yonder," will you be there?

"The hospital tents had been filling up as fast as the wounded men had been brought to the rear, among the number was a young man mortally wounded, just able to speak. It was near midnight and many a loved one lay sleeping on the battlefield the sleep that knows no waking

until Jesus shall call for them. The surgeons had been on their rounds of duty, and for a moment all was quiet. Suddenly this young man, before speechless, calls in a clear voice, "Here!" The surgeon hastened to his side and asked what he wished. "Nothing," he said, "They are calling the roll in Heaven, and I was answering to my name." "He turned his head and was gone—gone to join the great army whose uniform is washed white in the blood of the Lamb, and to answer to his name at the roll-call in Heaven."

"The image of Christ that is forming within us, that is life's one charge. Let every project stand aside for that. Till Christ be formed no man's work is finished. No religion crowned. No life has fulfilled its end. Is the infinite task begun? Then how are we to be different? Time cannot change men. Death cannot change men." Christ can, therefore, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

"And you are to be perfected, not according to the things that you plan, but according to the divine pattern. Over and above what you are doing for yourself, God is working to make you like Him. Your portrait and mine are being painted, and God by wondrous strokes and influences is working us up to His own ideal, and the glorious declaration is that when you stand before God and see what has been done for you, you shall be satisfied. O, word that has been wandering solitary and without an habitation since the world began and the morning stars sang together for joy! Has there ever been a human creature that could stand on earth while clothed in the flesh and say, I am satisfied." "What is the meaning of the word? Sufficiently filled, filled full, filled up in every part, and when God's work is complete, we shall stand before Him and with the bright ideal and glorified conception of heavenly aspiration

upon us, looking up to God and back on ourselves, we shall say, I am satisfied, for we shall be like Him."

The aspiration for larger life,
My God implants within my heart;
Each day with incentive new is rife,
Since now I only know in part.

The viewless heights beckon me on,
I cannot linger by the way;
My path on which the Sun has shone
Must lead me to an endless day.

Glimpses of glory bright I see,
Quicken my footsteps to the goal,
Prophecies of what I shall be
While the eternal ages roll.

Naught in this world to satisfy,
All things in imperfect condition;
My hope my Lord will ratify
In the day of eternal fruition.

My mission is to watch and wait
For the revelation of God's plan;
His infinite mind has fixed the date
When I shall reach the perfect man.

Till then I anticipate the prize;
Till then, my purpose to attain,
For some day beyond the skies,
With Christ and Saints I shall reign.

DR. CARSON'S SPEECH *in* BEHALF *of* BRISTOL *for* PRESBYTERIAN ASSEMBLY*

Mr. Moderator, Fathers and Brethren:

I have the privilege and the pleasure of extending to you an invitation, which I am sure, if I were in your place, I would accept promptly, unanimously and enthusiastically.

The first reason I mention why you should come to Bristol, is a Chronological reason. When the General Assembly convenes in our city in 1912, it will have been 16 years since this court of our church met in the Synod of Tennessee. Then, too, the Assembly has never convened in Bristol nor in the section of country between Lexington, Va., and Knoxville, Tenn. You have received a cordial invitation to meet in the Second Presbyterian church of Richmond, Va. Let me remind you that in the 50 years' history of our church the Assembly has met twice in the city of Richmond and that the Synod of Virginia has had the Assembly since the Synod of Tennessee. The brethren from Richmond desire you to meet there especially to celebrate the centennial of Union Theological Seminary. We are, of course, interested in this beloved institution of our church, and I think it would be well to observe the centennial, but would it not be better to have this celebration as something distinct from the sessions of the Assembly, so that it could have the right of way with an attractive program, and also that the Assembly might be free to use its time for the consideration of the urgent and manifold business which it will have to consider.

Three of our seminaries have been represented in this As-

*This address is an elaboration of the original. Inasmuch as it is a part of the history of our General Assembly, and of the Church of which I am pastor, I have included it in this volume.—Charles C. Carson.

sembly including the Union Seminary. We have met in the chapel of the Louisville seminary to witness the inauguration of the new president, Rev. Charles R. Hemphill, D. D., and to hear his excellent address. We have heard the thrilling historical address of Rev. Alexander White, D. D., of Columbia seminary, on the origin and progress of our church, and we have been charmed by the eloquent address, on a similar subject, of Rev. Theron H. Rice, D. D., of Union seminary. It has been but a few years since the president of Union Seminary, Dr. Walter W. Moore, was honored by the Assembly with the moderatorship of this body, and today the pastor of the Second church of Richmond, Rev. Russell Cecil, D. D., is presiding over the sessions of this Assembly. In all this the Assembly has honored itself and also these distinguished sons.

My brethren, it is not far from Virginia to Bristol. In fact, Bristol is partly in Virginia, and it ought to be sufficient honor to Virginians to be next to Tennessee, as they will be if you come to Bristol. I say this with pardonable pride, as Tennessee is my native State.

The second reason you should come to Bristol is a Geographical reason.

Bristol is so located as to be easily accessible to all sections of our southern country. I left there at 4 P. M. Monday and reached Louisville at 8 A. M. the following morning. I took a sleeper and came through without change, and I may remark that I had very little change when I arrived. Our city can be reached via the Southern railroad from Chattanooga and Asheville and points east, west and south by the Norfolk and Western, from the east and the north by the Virginia and Southwestern, connecting with the L. & N. and by the C., C. & O.

Bristol is located in the two states of Tennessee and Vir-

ginia. State street is the principal business street and the middle of the street car track on this street defines the line between the two states. One of the rails is in Tennessee and the other in Virginia. You can sit in the car on one side going and be in one state, and in the same car on the other side returning and be in the other state. Surely that is success going and coming. I may be telling you marvellous things difficult to believe, but seeing is believing. This reminds me of a story the brethren from the North Carolina Synod will appreciate. Several men were talking in Valdosta, Ga., where I was formerly pastor. One of them said, "I saw a very peculiar thing in North Carolina. Two streams intersected. The waters of one were clear and of the other muddy. But, strange to say, the waters did not seem to mingle. The clear one was just as clear and the muddy one was just as muddy after the intersection." An old gentleman in the crowd said to the man who told the story: "My friend, you wouldn't have believed that if you hadn't seen it, would you?" He replied: "No." "Well," said the old man, "I haven't seen it." You may not believe what I am telling you about Bristol. I ask you to come and see. The dual nature of our city will be of interest to you.

For instance, if you get out of order on one side of the city you can retreat to the other and escape arrest. Some of the brethren who find it difficult to hold down one pulpit will be able to hold down with both feet at the same time the two great commonwealths of Tennessee and Virginia. You will be a bigger man in your own estimation by virtue of your ability to perform this feat.

Some one asked me if we could entertain the Assembly. Surely we can. We can entertain you twice. You have heard the story of the negro and the bullet. A negro had

done something for which the officer sought to arrest him. He, however, ran and the officer shot at him, and then he seemingly disappeared from mortal sight. The next day the officer found him out in the country and said to him: "Jim, didn't you hear that bullet when I fired at you yesterday?" "Yassah, boss," said Jim, "I heard it twice. I hear dat bullet when it passed me, and I hear it when I passed it."

If you come to Bristol we will let you eat twice, and sleep twice. Some of you can preach twice, and if the exercise is not too violent for you you can actually think twice before you speak, which, in some cases, would be more satisfactory to you and to your hearers.

We have invited you twice to meet in Bristol. We extended you an invitation last year. We hardly expected you to accept it then, but we do expect you to accept it now. Richmond certainly does not expect you to accept the invitation there when first extended, especially when Louisville had to ask you several times and Bristol has had to ask you twice.

We invited you twice as a congregation. We took a vote on asking you at our prayer meeting service, and then on the following Sabbath. We will take pride in your presence, and many visitors from the surrounding country, which abounds in Presbyterians, will doubtless attend the sessions of the Assembly. So we have a strong pull on you from a geographical standpoint.

The third reason why you should come to Bristol is a Topographical reason.

We are in the Appalachian section. Our elevation is 1700 feet. There the "mountains rear to heaven their bald and blackened cliffs and bow their tall heads to the plains." And what gorgeous sunsets! It is said that the Sun never sets on the possessions of the British Islands, but I want to

say to you that in East Tennessee—the Switzerland of America—the Sun sets every twenty-four hours, and the glow and the afterglow will leave a picture in your memory that you will cheirsh beyond the sunset's radiant glow.

On either side of Bristol, about equidistant, is the Natural Tunnel in Southwest Virginia, which some have said is more wonderful than the Natural Bridge, and the Great Gorge in Tennessee, on the narrow gauge railroad, which is said to be the most magnificent scenery east of the Rocky mountains. Then, as you approach beautiful Bristol, from every direction the charm of nature will greet your vision. Inspiring scenes, lofty mountains, sparkling streams, luxuriant meadows and then glorious provision at the end of the way, including good, old sweet ham and yellow-legged chickens. Do I hear you preachers say: "Enuff said?"

The fourth reason why you should come to Bristol is a Biographical reason. It was from these mountains and valleys that the "over mountain men" under Sevier, and Shelby and Campbell marched to do the valiant service, which is chronicled in fadeless letters on the pages of history. It was Samuel Doak, a Presbyterian minister, who offered the prayer at Sycamore Shoals that the "God of Battles" would smile upon their mission and give success to their arms. On, in the inspiration of that appeal to the Almighty and in the conviction of an urgent and mighty cause, they moved until the record of King's Mountain was made—the tide of the Revolutionary war was turned, and the independence of the American colonies was assured.

The fifth and last reason why you should come to Bristol is an Ecclesiastical reason.

The Presbyterian membership of our city is about 1,100. We have four churches, two on the Tennessee side and two

on the Virginia side. We have a hospitable people, who will entertain you with a cultured and lavish hand.

The church, of which I am pastor, where your sessions will be held, is the mother church with a membership of about 550. She has an impressive history. She has had 21 ministers on her church roll. The records show that she has had ten pastors and stated supplies. The Rev. James King was one of her pastors. He was a pioneer minister of this section; a man of means, owning the site of Bristol—known at that time as "King's Meadows." He gave the funds and the land for the establishment of King College, which bears his name. The city reveres his memory and many of his descendants are here with earnest minds and consecrated hearts to perpetuate his name and to reincarnate his purposes.

Rev. George A. Caldwell, D. D., was pastor 1865 to 1891. He was a prince among preachers. His ministry was evangelistic. His eloquent sermons were heard all over our country, and to this day many recall some of his texts and revel in the thrill of his impassioned speech. He was a man of attractive personality. He had strong convictions and the courage to advocate them. The gentle spirit of his beloved companion is still with us and she greets her pastor and other ministers with tender interest and engaging grace. The name of this impressive man is perpetuated in sons and daughters and grandchildren.

Rev. A. Blackburn, Rev. Daniel Rogan, Rev. J. M. Hoffmeister and Rev. J. J. Robinson served the church with ability and fidelity in the early years of her history.

Then there was Rev. D. L. Wilson, who in a few months endeared himself to the members of his flock, and who was called to his reward after a brief and effective ministry.

His consecrated son, Lacy, is a deacon in our church and a benediction to our entire community.

Then there is Rev. W. R. Laird, D. D., and Rev. W. O. Cochrane, D. D., both of whom gave to the church their earnest service and are yet in the midst of a fruitful ministry in Danville, Va., and Georgetown, Ky.

Surely the present pastor has entered into labors abundant.

A recent writer said that it was his opinion that the section of country of which Bristol is about the center, in proportion to area and population, had given the largest number of ministers to the Presbyterian Church. Unless it be Charlotte, N. C., probably no other locality in our church bounds is more frequently the temporary abode of preachers who have their pastorates elsewhere.

If you desire to honor an institution that has graced the Church with preachers of commendable endeavor and conspicuous service, come and honor King College. Her history is illuminating and inspiring. She has always been poor, but she has made many rich. Out of 134 graduates she has sent 73 into the ministry, 63 of whom are in the Presbyterian Church. In proportion to the number of graduates, I doubt if any other institution can show such a percentage of Ministers of the Gospel.

Let us call the roll of many of her distinguished sons who became Presbyterian Ministers and of those connected with her history:

Dear Dr. J. D. Tadlock presided over her destiny for years, and by his thorough scholarship and genuine piety made an eternal impression on those who sat under his radiant instruction. Dr. J. A. Wallace, his son-in-law, was one of the first graduates, and for years the honored president. The work of this man of God may not be as

widely known as that of some college presidents, but his associates and acquaintances have marked his manifold labors as teacher and preacher, and he deserves a crown of gold set with the jewels of the distinguished men whose characters he has helped to build and whose purposes he has served to define.

There is Rev. S. R. Preston, D. D., a fluent speaker and an instructive preacher, a man of educational talent, who did a noble work as president of Chicora College, Greenville, S. C. His studious and energetic son, Rev. Fairman Preston, who, I understand, was designated by a distinguished editor of missionary information, as one of the greatest missionary statesmen on the foreign field.

There is Rev. I. S. Anderson, D.D., who abounds in labors for the Master, whose interest in King College is pronounced, and has recently been substantially expressed by him in a munificent gift for the endowment fund.

There is Rev. J. C. Cowan, D. D., the practical preacher, the sympathetic pastor, the genial friend, whose place in my heart is secure because under his ministry I united with the Church.

There is Rev. N. M. Long, D. D., now a distinguished preacher in the city of Memphis, Tenn., who was one of the most brilliant students King College ever had.

There is Rev. C. L. Ewing, whose friends are numerous, and whose ministry has been greatly blessed. He represents his Presbytery in the present Assembly.

There is Rev. R. C. Reed, D. D., who wields the pen of a ready writer, and who is now the distinguished professor of Church History in Columbia Seminary.

There is Rev. J. S. Lyons, D. D., a man of marked ability as a preacher, and the beloved pastor for years of the First Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Ky.

T. S. Clyce, D. D., one of the leading men of the Synod of the great State of Texas.

Joe Sevier, the gracious and beloved pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Augusta, Ga., in which the Southern Presbyterian Church was born fifty years ago, the young man who so eloquently presented the gavel made out of the pulpit of that historic church to the Moderator of this Assembly.

Then there is Jim and Joe Vance. The first question you will probably be asked when you come to Bristol will be, "Were you ever here before?" The second question will be, "Do you know Jim and Joe Vance?" Of course you will say "Yes." I want you to visit in the home of these boys. Their father and mother are still with us. It is true that the light of another world is beating in their faces, and it may be that they will be in the "General Assembly of the firstborn in Heaven" before you come to Bristol. If they are, the Commissioners of that Assembly will participate in the benedictions that will fall from their glorified spirits.

There is John Thomas and Trigg Thomas, two men who are doing a great work and are beloved as few preachers.

There is S. R. Gammon, D. D., and George E. Henderlite, men who are advocating the cause of Christ in Brazil with signal ability and splendid success.

There is Charley Pratt, the eloquent advocate of missions, the zealous secretary of the Laymen's Movement, whose purpose is to spend his consecrated strength in Korea as a missionary of the Cross.

There is Rev. Tilden Scherer, whose love for his alma mater is so strong as to induce him to give his enviable talents as Field Secretary of King College.

There is the present President, Prof. B. R. Smith, who

has made a splendid record in achievement and popularity, who with his accomplished wife and zealous co-workers in the faculty, have inspired renewed interest in this institution so rich in precious memories and so promising in future service.

The first graduating class of 1871 consisted of seven members, six of whom are ministers now living: Rev. J. A. Wallace, D. D., Rev. S. R. Preston, D. D., Rev. J. C. Cowan, D. D., Rev. N. M. Long, D. D., Rev. David W. Carter, D. D., Rev. C. L. Ewing.

Other ministerial graduates, many of whom have attained prominence in the Presbyterian Church, are: Rev. D. O. Byars, Rev. G. T. Chandler, Rev. T. M. McConnell, D. D., Rev. J. M. Rhea, Rev. J. E. Latham, D. D., Rev. J. W. Rogan, D. D., Rev. W. T. Spears, Rev. A. D. Tadlock, D. D., Rev. J. M. Cowan, Rev. R. F. King, Rev. Joshua Phipps, Rev. J. B. DeVault, Rev. J. N. Vance, Rev. M. W. Millard, Rev. M. W. Doggett, D. D., Rev. J. P. Doggett, Rev. E. D. Gregory, Rev. J. L. Allison, D. D., Rev. R. D. Carson, Rev. W. W. Carson, Rev. C. C. Hoffmeister, Rev. C. S. Newman, D. D., Rev. H. H. Newman, Rev. B. D. Kennedy, Rev. J. P. Anderson, Rev. C. H. Maury, Rev. G. T. Bourne, Rev. T. J. McConnell, Rev. H. C. Kegley, Rev. H. S. Bradshaw, Rev. J. A. Anderson, Rev. A. L. Patterson, D. D., Rev. Marvin McFerrin, Rev. W. H. T. Squires, Rev. Robert McInturf, Rev. J. R. McRee, Rev. A. H. Doak, Rev. D. F. McConnell, Rev. J. K. Roberts, Rev. Guy Duff, Rev. Robert L. Cowan, Rev. S. G. Wood, Rev. H. M. Jenkins, Rev. F. E. Clark, Rev. R. L. Offield, the two Delaney boys, the two McChesney boys, and the seven Wallace boys.

Rev. David W. Carter, D. D., a prominent minister in the Methodist Church, a missionary of wide experience and

commendable success; Rev. John E. Naff, Presiding Elder in the Methodist Church; Rev. Edward Tilly, minister and missionary of eminence in the Methodist Church; Rev. S. A. Senter, minister in the Methodist Church, whose promotion has been rapid; Rev. Bruce Hatcher, D. D., an able minister in the Lutheran Church, and Rev. W. W. Hamilton, D. D., the efficient pastor of the First Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., are sons of King College.

In addition to this unique record as the mother of preachers, the college has graduated teachers, doctors, lawyers, three congressmen, and also men of influence in the commercial world.

Sullivan County has furnished other eminent preachers to the Presbyterian Church whose names I have not mentioned.

There is Rev. Samuel Rhea, probably the first missionary from this country to Persia. An account of his extensive work may be found in the interesting book, "The Tennessean in Persia," written by his wife. He is buried in Persia. A monument to his memory stands in the cemetery at Blountville.

Mr. John M. Fain, an elder in the First Presbyterian Church of Bristol, is his nephew. Mrs. Amanda Ensor, a member of the same church, is his first cousin and remembers him well. Many of his relatives are now living in the county. His was a rare spirit and he wrought well in those days of pioneer hardships inseparable from missionary service.

There is Rev. J. P. Gammon, who was a lovable man and an excellent preacher. He was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Asheville, N. C., and also of the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Va.

Then there are four brothers by the name of Bachman—

Nathan, Jonathan, Lynn and Robert Bachman. These splendid men first saw the light of day in the old county of Sullivan. Rarely does one family furnish to the world, and especially to the Gospel ministry, four such distinguished sons. A few years ago these four brothers occupied the same pulpit, and three of them installed the youngest brother as pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Knoxville, Tenn., an incident that could hardly be duplicated in church annals.

Rev. J. W. Bachman, D. D., is the retiring moderator of this Assembly and the efficient chairman of the epoch-making Committee of Systematic Beneficence.

Fathers and brethren, all of this spells Bristol—Bristol chronologically, geographically, topographically, biographically, ecclesiastically, theologically, and inevitably.

Bristol once, Bristol twice, Bristol accepted as the meeting place of the next General Assembly. Surely I will be permitted to send a telegram at once announcing your favorable decision.